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★ April

The American Mercury



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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page vi)

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By W. BÉRAN WOLFE, M.D., *Psychiatrist,
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(Continued from page viii)

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Macdonald Douglas. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. The
author describes his book as a miscellany
of facts and fancies, folklore and fragments,
poems and prose, and he is right. It is, how-
ever, an unusually comprehensive mis-
cellany; among the facts, for example, there
are lists and descriptions of Gaelic place-
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dars, country superstitions, even the alpha-
bet and its English equivalents. The tone is
a little too obviously "popular", but the
book triumphs over the style.

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Gray. \$2.50. *Dutton*. An excellent survey of
the poetry of Scotland from 1350 to the
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them, from little-known works and sources
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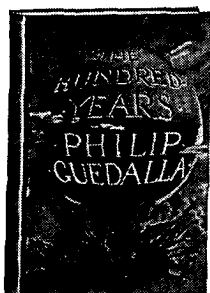
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Howard Mumford Jones. \$1.75. *Holt*. Pro-
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all the shooting was about.

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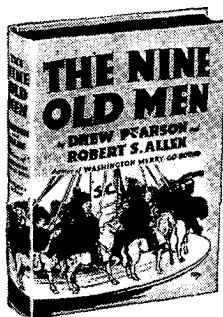
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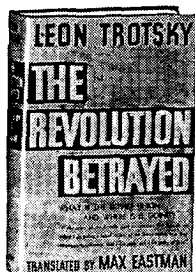
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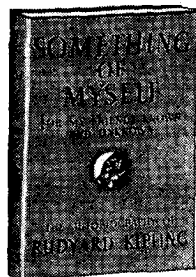
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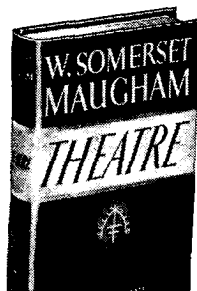
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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page x)

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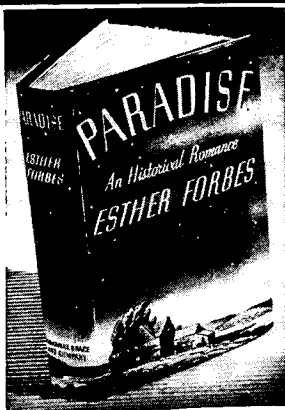
★ ★ **POEMS**, by C. F. MacIntyre. \$1.25. *Macmillan*. An unusually distinctive mind is at work here; fastidious, even elegant, but by no means effete. The thought is precise, the technique modern without being excessively experimental, the phrasing alternately subtle and spectacular. The effect is a transcription of the immediate scene rendered in a sharp but measured originality.

★ ★ **A TROPHY OF ARMS**, by Ruth Pitter. \$1.75. *Macmillan*. Miss Pitter's cleverness was manifest in her recent *A Mad Lady's Garland*; this collection is a more serious work. Her lyrics are musical enough, but her phrasing is conventional; though the verse is winning it scarcely lives up to James Stephens' over-written preface.

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(Continued on page xiv)



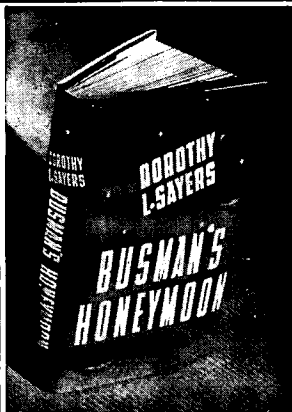
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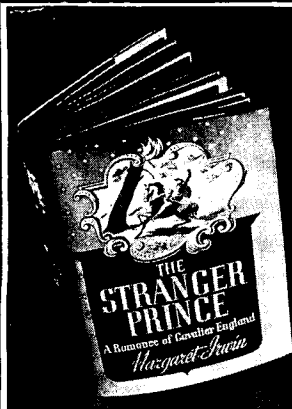


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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page xii)

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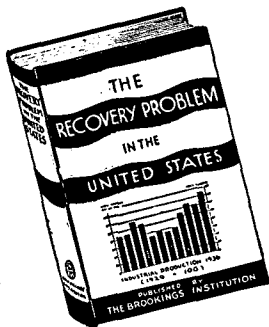
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★ **LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING**. \$2.50. *Harcourt, Brace*. The late messiah of California is already on his way to canonization by the Radical hierarchy. Here he speaks his tangential thoughts on humanity in general, taking care to save the attar for the Communists.



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REVOLUTION IN MICHIGAN

BY GORDON CARROLL

THOSE benevolent dictators of American public opinion—the newspapers—have recently completed their findings in the case of the striking automobile workers of Michigan *vs.* the General Motors Corporation. No other industrial dispute of late years has received more juicy publicity, nor been productive of such alarmed editorial-page jeremiads. Yet in all this welter of wordage one phenomenon stands forth: No newspaper took the trouble to point out that what actually transpired in Flint, Detroit, Saginaw, *et al.*, was not a mere joust between those two traditional enemies, Labor and Capital, but a serious economic upheaval staged by a handful of Left-wing racketeers.

This singular oversight, of

course, cannot be laid to a blind partisanship on the part of reporters and editorial writers. On the contrary, the gentlemen of the press performed their tasks as capably as was possible under the circumstances. Their error inhered in the fact that they, along with millions of otherwise astute American citizens, failed to apprehend a certain indubitable truth lately incorporated into the infantry manual of the New Labor Warfare. This truth is as follows:

That, in addition to organized Labor and organized Capital, there is now a self-invited third party in *all* major industrial conflicts—the Radical politico-gangster. His type is new in the arena of trade unionism; his presence is highly dangerous to both Labor and Capital.

He speaks with insistent vehemence as the "voice of the majority"; he is a master of propaganda and promises; he is a shrewd, ruthless seeker after political power; he poses as the one and only Champion of the Downtrodden. Yet, in actuality, he represents no one but himself.

Now if these facts were to be broadcast publicly, and comprehended by employer, employee, and public alike, the future of industrial relations in this country might not appear so forbidding. Indeed, with the facts thus brought into the open, Labor and Capital could take mutual steps to protect themselves from the growing threat of an unwanted Left-wing dictatorship. But strange to relate, the Radical minority possesses *one* powerful, almost insuperable advantage. Under New Deal tutelage, it enjoys the full support and legal authority of Federal, State, county, and city governments. This is the most singular detail in a truly remarkable picture. Industrial legislation is drafted for the minority's benefit; new methods of arbitration and negotiation are patterned to indulge its whims; all the vast force of public opinion is artfully maneuvered to make the Left-wing's program appear a eucharistic crusade to free the Un-

derprivileged from the forces of entrenched wealth and greed. As a result, the entire resources of the American press, the radio, and the newsreels — three omnipotent institutions reputedly subsidized by the Economic Royalists — are available to the Radicals in order that they may place their ceaseless propaganda before the citizenry. If a more fantastic situation has ever before existed in the economic framework of a great nation, history fails to remark it.

To deny these assertions is to deny the evidence of what occurred in Michigan during January and February. Here was an industrial dispute that at no time involved the reasonable questions of trade unionism, collective bargaining, wage and working conditions, or the full-to-bursting dinner pail. True, these phrases were mentioned throatily from time to time by John L. Lewis and his entrepreneurs, but merely in the manner of camouflage. The only genuine issue at stake — from the day the first Michigan sit-down occurred until the strike ended in a flurry of platitudes — was *Minority Rule*; *i.e.*, blanket control of workmen by a small bloc of Left-wing careerists who precipitated the Michigan clash for political reasons, who were repudiated as

spokesmen by the overwhelming majority of workers, and who maintained their occupation of General Motors' plants in the face of the most vociferous protests ever raised by an army of non-striking employees.

Unfortunately, this state of affairs cannot be charged to the vagaries of fate. For the Michigan upheaval was not spontaneous in any sense. After seven years of the Depression, it appeared obvious that the first indications of genuine recovery would come in the basic industries. Hence, General Motors was the logical choice of the Radicals as a battleground to test their hungry political power. Moreover, the far-flung structure of GM, based as it is on scores of plants located throughout the country, made the corporation especially vulnerable. The Leftists' task lay not so much in ascertaining the weakest link in the production chain, but rather in breaking the chain at any given point. And so, long before the Flint sit-downs commenced in late December, the messiahs of the minority had scrutinized GM's set-up with an eye to frontal and flank attacks. Also during 1936, they had assayed their own strength of organization, their strategy, and their propaganda methods in the Pennsylvania steel

mills, in the Akron rubber plants, and in the fo'castles and stokeholds of the American merchant marine. When finally they marched on Michigan, they flew the assorted banners of the Committee for Industrial Organization, the United Auto Workers, the United Mine Workers, the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, the United Rubber Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and a host of small-fry lodges.

At the time, majority labor in the automotive industry did not have, nor has it now, any insurmountable grievances with management. Had any such disputes arisen, they could have been arbitrated amicably between accredited representatives of factory and corporation, *i.e.*, collective bargaining. But collective bargaining—or negotiation in any guise—is not a tenet of the New Radical Theology. On the contrary, the Cause thrives on enmity, threats, and disorder. Hence, when the high command finally set zero hour for the Michigan invasion, the spearhead of attack was a small group of proselytized agitators in the Fisher Body plants at Flint. At no time did these men represent more than a noisy minority of their fellow employees; in no instance did they clamor for a settlement of specified

grievances. Instead, operating on *Führer* Stalin's principle of direct action, they Sat Down. And instantly, the Radical evangelists began dispensing propaganda hot from the hand-presses. Theirs was the first voice of anger to be raised publicly; their class-conscious antics the first to be photographed by an army of art-hungry camera men who swooped down upon Flint. Not one newspaper in the country emphasized that the sit-downers did not represent a majority in the industry, or that they had forced themselves into the factories over the opposition of non-Marxian employees. On the contrary, Page One headlines proclaimed the hot news that GM had been "struck".

Within twenty-four hours, the bulk of America's gaudiest Communists and Socialists swarmed into Flint, Detroit, Saginaw, and way stations, to bulwark the advance guard. Subsequent headlines that week did not play up the fact that tens of thousands of non-strikers were being deprived of their pay; Page One devoted itself to high-powered dispatches concerning such horse-and-buggy terms as "collective bargaining", "trade unionism", "working conditions", and "negotiations". Millions of words were written and published concerning Messrs. John L.

Lewis, John Brophy, Homer Martin, Powers Hapgood, etc., but not a word to explain the political identity and class-war records of these self-made labor careerists, the organizations behind them, their indubitable Communist technique, and the all-inclusive fact that what they wanted out of Michigan and GM was not a program of Utopian benefits for the workingman, but merely as many dues-paying recruits as they could snare for a forward-looking, politically-minded organization. None of the Leftists professed any serious hopes of cracking GM; the idea, in fact, was never even entertained, as the CIO organizers confided in the camaraderie of their beer-hall chats.

But these facts did not by any means complete the picture. For beyond the slight material gains in recruits and dues, the CIO, when it finally pulled out of Flint in preparation for Bigger Political Things, could point with pride to one gargantuan achievement: By utilizing the millions of dollars' worth of publicity tendered gratis by the so-called Capitalist press, the United Automobile Workers had received, throughout the strike, the full and unqualified support of the Federal and State governments. In this sense, there has never been a more astounding Radical coup.

II

The noteworthy events of the Michigan affair are of such recent vintage that it is unnecessary to review them here. But a few of the fundamental questions involved are worth examining, in that they throw light upon the intricate thought-processes of the generals and brigadiers of the New Labor Army. For example, did there exist, prior to the GM strike, any means of ascertaining the views of automotive workers on the titillating topic of unionization? If so, were such statistics collected under legal auspices, and were they accurate?

Oddly enough, the answer to these questions is "Yes". The survey was undertaken by the United States Government in the momentous days of 1934, when Gen. Hugh S. Johnson dreamed of Paths to Glory, and the Blue Eagle was flying from every crossroads filling station. On March 25 of that year, Dr. Roosevelt, alarmed at the progress of labor strife in the purlieus of Detroit, was forced to the unhappy conclusion that, for once, he must take an unequivocal stand on a subject of national importance. Throughout the sovereign State of Michigan, hundreds of soapbox orators, representing a

dozen Left-wing unions, were assailing the Bosses: they claimed they had the 200,000 automobile workers organized as high as eighty per cent; mid-Western newspapers talked of an imminent Red Revolution; fearful London financial editors grabbed the transatlantic telephone. En route to the White House, General Johnson, finally at grips with Destiny, declared: "This is the most serious situation that we have faced. The entire Recovery Program is at stake!" In other words, the Administration was on the spot.

There issued promptly in Washington a State document, bearing certain familiar Rooseveltian flourishes. It was called "The President's Settlement", and for the benefit of the Michigan motor industry, the following rules were promulgated for all litigants in the controversy:

1 — The employers agree to bargain collectively with the freely chosen representatives of groups and not to discriminate in any way against any employee on the ground of his union labor affiliation.

2 — If there be more than one group, each bargaining committee shall have total membership *pro rata* to the number of men each member represents.

3 — NRA to set up within twenty-four hours a board, responsible to the President of the United States, to sit in Detroit to pass on all questions of

representation, discharge, and discrimination. Decision of the board shall be final and binding on employer and employees. Such a board to have access to all payrolls and to all lists of claimed employee representation and such board will be composed of:

(a) A labor representative, (b) an industry representative, (c) a neutral.

After some pleasant social conferences, Dr. Roosevelt appointed the puissant triumvirate as follows: Richard L. Byrd of Pontiac, a local executive of the American Federation of Labor; Nicholas Kelley, general counsel for the Chrysler Motors Corporation; and Dr. Leo Wolman, professor of economics at Columbia University and one of the White House's most eminent advisers. The appointments were accompanied by another Rooseveltian proclamation:

In the settlement there is a framework for a new structure of industrial relations—a new basis of understanding between employers and employees. I would like to know that in the settlement just reached in the automobile industry we have started a new course in social engineering in the United States.

Under such high benediction, the Board swung into action in Detroit on March 29, pledged to bring order out of the chaos then surrounding the motor factories. The first problems, of course, were routine and orthodox: A. F. of L.

spokesmen promptly proclaimed that they alone represented a majority of the Michigan proletariat; smaller unions countered that they were the recipients of the holy word; a number of unattached citizens of messianic leanings put in their oars; and all three groups deluged the Board with affidavits charging rape and murder against their respective opponents. But despite such traditional *bon mots*, the Board proceeded with its task, and finally, on April 19, 1935, announced the results of the employee balloting held under its auspices. They were as follows:

Unaffiliated	111,878	68.6%
Company Unions	21,774	13.3%
American Federation of Labor	14,057	8.6%
Variously Affiliated	7,071	4.3%
Void Ballots	8370	5.2%
Total	163,150	

Total eligible voters 191,618
Per cent who voted 85%

The singular point to be noted here is that the United Automobile Workers union, as an affiliate of the CIO, does not appear on the list. Whatever brooding converts Mr. Lewis possessed at the time of the poll must have been members of the A. F. of L. and "Variously Affiliated" groups, or 12.9 per cent of the total. The above chart also contains evidence of

several other remarkable facts. First, the balloting was conducted by a non-partisan board created by order of the President of the United States. Second, the canvass was made during parlous times, when Radical minority influence was at its height. Third, the balloting was secret. Fourth, no provable charges were filed of conspiracy, coercion, or intimidation. And fifth, the results showed emphatically that the large majority of automobile workers had no desire to hook their stars to the chariots of professional labor messiahs.

All these facts being admitted openly, it requires an extremely erudite person to explain why, in January and February, 1937, not two years after the Board's poll, the Federal government threw its full support to a striking minority of GM workers, all of whom belonged to a Left-wing organization which did not exist, in any appreciable sense, at the time Dr. Roosevelt first considered the industry to be facing a revolutionary labor crisis. To say glibly that the attitude of the Administration was based on the principle of passive resistance — on the hope of peace-at-any-price — is to skirt the question. Nor is it plausible to assert that the New Deal officios in Washington were in ignorance of

the true state of affairs in the world of Labor. Neither of these explanations squares with the Roosevelt crack-down record. Hence, it must be assumed that the background forces at work were energized by ambitions of singular political significance.

To identify these forces, however, it is necessary first to continue the examination of Michigan's recent history. For, if the political attitude of the Administration was admittedly remarkable, the application of the sit-down technique in Flint was equally so. The Sit-Down, it may be observed, is rapidly assuming the status of a national fad, in the same fashion that pole-sitting, marathon dancing, and miniature golf fascinated the proletariat not so many years ago. Yet the occupation of the GM plants at Flint struck a more somber note, in the sense that the recreational whims of the Republic's population were not so much concerned as was the basic law of a constitutional democracy. Disregard for the principle of private property rights is precisely the same as disregard for all Law. The seizure of GM's plants in Flint, in this sense, was no different from the seizure of a bank, a department store, a saloon, or a Turkish bath by dissatisfied employees.

Or consider another parallel. Suppose that on the morning of November 4, 1936, Governor Landon had wormed his way into Dr. Roosevelt's private study on the pretext of discussing certain injustices waged by General Farley's poll-watchers. Suppose that after a pleasant conference with the *Führer*, Mr. Landon had suddenly gone loco, leaped across the *Führer's* desk, sat down upon the regal throne, and declared in a loud voice that, as an accredited representative of the minority in yesterday's balloting, he proposed to occupy the White House until Mr. Farley refunded in cash all the WPA money lavished upon some millions of wavering voters. Has anyone any doubt of what would have happened next? Not at all. The Army, the Navy, and the Marine Corps, bulwarked by a battalion of G-men, would have thrown the offending Kansas governor out onto the hard asphalt of Pennsylvania Avenue. And as a penalty for his affront to the reigning autocrat, Mr. Landon no doubt would have drawn a fifty-year sentence in Alcatraz.

Yet, in essence, this was precisely the situation created by the sit-downers at Flint. The fact that they remained in GM's plants was not due to any delicate problem in

the application of the law of the land, but merely because Dr. Roosevelt, Governor Frank Murphy of Michigan, Mme. La Pasionaria Perkins, and the envoys of the Department of Labor were hesitant to take direct action against a minority group of surly Americanos who might, at some future date, be in a position to influence the outcome of a national or State election. In other words, there was no question whatever of upholding the Law; the important issue at stake was politics.

III

At this point, it might be well to reveal the identity and political affiliations of the shock-troops who, under Mr. Lewis' command, precipitated and conducted single-handed the Michigan strike. If the ideological persuasions of these assorted labor crusaders can be established, the disclosure will go a long way toward explaining the actual motives behind the UAW's campaign. The following list includes virtually all the Radical impresarios upon whose shoulders lay the task of cracking General Motors:

JOHN BROPHY, the executive director of the CIO, a leader in the campaign to unionize the Steel industry, and the man accused inferentially by Mr.

Lewis in 1928 of being a paid agent of the Soviet Government. In that same year, Mr. Brophy and Powers Hapgood united with the Communists in a "Save-the-Union" movement. Later, both were identified as officers of the National Miners Union, affiliated with the Communist Trade Union Unity League.

POWERS HAPGOOD, an organizer for the CIO, veteran rabble-rouser, and member of the national executive committee of the Socialist Party.

ADOLPH GERMER, member of the advisory board of the CIO and former national secretary of the Socialist Party. He was found guilty under the Espionage Act in 1918 and sentenced to twenty years in Leavenworth, a verdict later upset on appeal.

SIDNEY HILLMAN, a director of the CIO and president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. An outstanding pro-Soviet, Socialist worker, and a former director of the Communist-supporting Garland Fund.

HOMER S. MARTIN, president of the United Automobile Workers and a Left-wing orator. A former Baptist pastor, Dr. Martin served in Mid-western pulpits until he found that his economic views clashed with those of the members of his church.

MAURICE SUGAR, Radical lawyer and Communist-endorsed candidate in the 1936 election for the office of Recorder's Judge in Detroit. Also author of the *Soup Song*, the Comrades' newest swing tune.

LEE PRESSMAN, lawyer for Communist and other Radical organizations.

LAWRENCE S. DAVIDOW, Radical lawyer and Socialist lecturer. He has been Detroit correspondent for the *New Leader*, an official Socialist trade publication.

WALTER, VICTOR, and ROY REUTHER. These three brothers are CIO organizers and active workers in various

Socialist causes. Victor and Walter are alumni of the distinguished Brookwood Labor College at Katonah, N. Y., a Socialist school for training Negro and white agitators.

ROGER N. BALDWIN, national director of the American Civil Liberties Union, the so-called "Liberal" organization which is the legal bulwark of the Communist Party in America.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT, Radical educator and speaker, professor at the University of Chicago, and one of the most articulate exponents of Communism in the United States.

LEO KRZYCKI, member of the advisory board of the CIO, vice-president of Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and a member of the national executive committee of the Socialist Party.

FRANK X. MARTEL, president of the A. F. of L. for Wayne County, Michigan, and a supporter of Left-wing trade movements.

WILLIAM WEINSTONE, general secretary for the Communist Party in the State of Michigan.

JOHN W. ANDERSON, an organizer for the CIO. In 1934, he was the candidate of the Communist Party for the governorship of Michigan.

MERLIN BISHOP, organizer for the CIO and a Socialist Party member.

MARY HEATON VORSE, revolutionary writer and competitor for the title of the Republic's No. 1 Lady Comrade.

ROSE PESOTTA, another Lady Comrade who currently represents the downtrodden garment workers of Manhattan. Once an intimate of Emma Goldman, she was formerly prominent in New York Anarchist circles.

JOSEPHINE HERBST, Communist writer and traveling reporter for the *New Masses*.

GENORA JOHNSON, leader of the militant Woman's Brigade at Flint and a member of the Socialist Party.

In addition to the aid of these distinguished spellbinders, the strikers received the full moral and financial support of the Communist Party of America, and its two leading publications, the *Daily Worker* and the *New Masses*. For some weeks, the Communist headquarters in New York devoted a considerable share of its activities to furthering the strike and succoring its representatives. In view of the fact that, exclusive of the above list, no other labor messiahs of note appeared on the Michigan scene, it is impossible to deny that the strike had its origin and its being in the inner councils of the most vociferous Radical groups in America.

It must be remembered, in this connection, that the Communist Party long ago discovered the inestimable value of political disguise. That is to say, the party has hundreds of class-conscious Pinkertons in industrial fields, none of whom bears the official label of the Communist hierarchy. Instead, they sport the tag of euphemistic and apparently innocuous political groups, such as various consumers' leagues, co-operative and "united front" societies, the American League Against War and Fascism, the American Civil Liberties Union, etc. Obviously, as in Michi-

gan, it would be a strategic error to identify each labor guerrilla with the badge of Mr. Earl Browder's militant Soviet party. But the purpose of all these noisy Radical organizations is precisely the same: unceasing agitation for the Class War. That they succeed consistently in deceiving the American public as to their true aims is not only an indication of the public's amazing gullibility, but a testimonial to the high dividends paid by the Left-wing's unceasing propaganda.

As for the defensive strategy employed by the General Motors Corporation during its Gethsemane period in Michigan, the record discloses a long series of tactical blunders. Primarily, GM had but one task to perform when the strike commenced. This was to issue an accurate and exhaustive public statement, emphasizing the following major points: (1) the corporation's right to private property; (2) the need for an *impartial* plebiscite among GM workers to ascertain their union sentiments; and (3) the obvious futility of negotiating with a partisan minority as the spokesman for *all* employees. If the corporation had issued such a manifesto, and then refused to debate further until its lawful rights had been vindicated,

the strike might have ended abruptly. But in the manner of American Big Business, GM committed the irreparable error of playing into its opponent's hands. The CIO and its Left-wing supporters thrive on discussion and windy argument; they are noticeably more adept with the pen than the sword; the secret of much of their technique lies in maneuvering the Capitalist Bosses into a series of positions which are then promptly made untenable by the force of propagandized public opinion.

General Motors fell into the CIO's trap with a calculated nicety. During January and February, the management rushed into print with innumerable pronouncements. No sooner had one issue been aired in the receptive public prints than another was raised, to the obscurement of the first. The result of all this, as the weeks dragged past, was to confuse — or anesthetize — the public, and to strengthen the Leftists' case. Instead of the conflict being pointed to a decisive battle, the strength of management was dissipated in a series of futile skirmishes.

It must be emphasized, however, that GM could point to extenuating factors, in the sense that Big Business functions under certain

rules and conventions. For one thing, the corporation, as 1937 arrived, was enjoying a burst of giddy prosperity after a succession of lean years. Production was soaring, with profits and dividends keeping pace. And when business is booming, corporate management is prone to compromise in the event of labor strife. Each closed plant spells a blow at production; each working day lost implies serious setbacks in a highly competitive market. Under the inexorable impulse of the profit motive, GM in 1937 chose to compromise, to argue, to negotiate, whereas during the pit of the Depression, it might have battled strenuously, on the premise that having nothing to lose, its full efforts could be expended in a decisive clash with its Left-wing foe. Yet in choosing the path of compromise, GM merely postponed a conflict which, sooner or later, must be fought to a finish.

Again, another factor influenced GM's conduct. Ever since the turn of the century, there has been an increasing tendency on the part of business to avoid violence and bloodshed in industrial strife. The publicity attendant upon a sanguine riot lingers in the American consciousness long after the issue at stake, no matter how vital, is

forgotten. Further, the Left-wing propaganda agencies maintain an unceasing campaign to keep such lurid incidents before the public. The most trivial skirmish is magnified into a major affair, until the citizenry, with the passing of time, comes to believe that Big Business employs a vast army of Cossacks, whose sole duty is to slaughter labor innocents and crack proletarian skulls. In the face of such propaganda, Big Business plays the role so skillfully forced upon it by its Left-wing enemy. It temporizes, it avoids physical violence, it hesitates to use the militant authority proscribed in such cases by the statutes of democracy. Indeed, mere mention of the police, civic deputies, or the National Guard is enough to disrupt many a serene board-of-directors' meeting, just as such heady talk disrupted conclaves of the Kerenskyites in Russia in 1917. But the result of such temporizing, of course, is inevitable defeat. The Left-wing reaps all the benefits of corporate non-violence while itself waging a fierce undercover battle of intimidation and brutality against all workers who refuse to accept the gospel according to St. Marx.

It was during just such a period of general confusion that the most singular paradox of the whole

Michigan strike received negative emphasis, to the future detriment of all American business. Under the canons of one of the New Deal's most sacrosanct edifices, the Wagner Labor Relations Act, it is emphatically specified that "when-ever a question . . . concerning the representation of employees . . . arises, the board (the National Labor Relations Board) may investigate". Following such an inquiry, the board shall provide for a hearing . . . "and may take a secret ballot of employees . . . to ascertain representatives" for collective bargaining purposes. It is unnecessary to emphasize here that the premise on which the Wagner Act is based is that the Employer is *always* wrong, the Employee is *always* right; or that a plebiscite on union sentiment can *only* be held at the request of the aggrieved strikers, whether a minority or no. These two tenets of New Deal theology have been repeatedly discussed in these pages and elsewhere. What really counts is that if the English language is an accepted medium of expression, the Wagner Act, no matter how biased, means precisely what it says. There are no evasions in its written provisions, no quibblings, no baited snares. Had such an employee-election been held in the

GM plants in Michigan, the results of the balloting would have disclosed, in the year 1937, the wishes of the workers involved—the same workers who were losing millions of dollars through enforced idleness. If changes of union sentiment had occurred since the Wolman survey in 1934–1935, they would have been promptly revealed—and the claims of the Leftist minority subjected to an impartial analysis. In view of these facts, can any informed person explain why the Federal government, acting under its own self-granted powers, did not urge that a poll be taken?

Unhappily, the answer to this question is not likely to be heard until the historians of the future proceed to analyze the mysterious decline of the twentieth century's greatest democracy. Up to the end of the strike on February 11, Mr. Lewis was the only minority litigant to speak his mind. When asked what he thought of GM's request for a plebiscite among the workers, Labor's Left-wing Colossus replied: "That is not satisfactory."

IV

As noted heretofore, the aspects of the Michigan strike discussed in

this article are not all-inclusive; but enough has been presented so that a valid conclusion may be drawn and a working thesis drafted. What is the actual implication of the Left-wing campaign recently concluded in Michigan? The answer can be supplied in one word: Revolution. Revolution against law, against order, against business, against consumer, against public, and, above all, against Organized Labor. The evidence in this respect is overwhelming. Each step taken by the Radical bloc is not a spontaneous move, but merely part of a carefully preconceived strategy; each publicized maneuver is designed to confuse corporate business and deceive the public; the sum total of all such efforts is shrewdly calculated to bring about a dramatic climax with the inevitability of a Grecian tragedy.

The technique displayed by the newly-solidified Left-wing minority is on all fours with the technique displayed by Lenin in Russia in 1917, by Mussolini in Italy in 1921, and by Hitler in Germany in 1925. The nomenclature may differ, the visible procedure may vary, but the underlying ideology, the method of seizing national power, is precisely the same. First, the creation of a compact *Schutz-*

staffel among the masses, dedicated to fomenting the Class War. Second, rebellion against the accredited leaders of Labor or Business, or both. Third, liaison with an ineffectual, "Liberal" government, in return for vote-getting promises. Fourth, revolt against this same government when the minority attains sufficient strength. Fifth, the usurpation of all national power in the name of a Collectivist State. And sixth, the proclamation that Utopia now exists on earth for all those who will pledge allegiance to their new *Führer*.

The Radical labor minority in America, by the simple process of chiseling into the field of industrial strife, has attained the first three of the objectives listed above. It has created an embittered nucleus of the Downtrodden and captained it with politico-racketeers; it has, as in Michigan, double-crossed the accredited leaders of organized Labor and organized Capital; it has effected a satisfactory working agreement with the most Utopian-minded government on earth in return for promissory votes — an agreement which will be swiftly tossed out the window when the opportune time arrives. From today onward, the minority will consolidate its position by repetition of the Michigan conflict, each suc-

cessive clash adding to its strength and prestige among the pliable masses. Having set forth on the long road to absolutism, there can be no returning.

The record of the New Deal theology to date would indicate that the Federal government, whenever and wherever possible, will offer complete co-operation to these new-found brethren. Already, the Left-wing has succeeded in outmaneuvering Big Business, in capturing the unlimited propaganda facilities of the national press, and in convincing millions of Americans that the new Radical drive is merely part of the Big Push against Wall Street, J. P. Morgan, the du Ponts, and all the other reigning devils of High Finance. Surely, with such preliminary success behind them, the labor racketeers cannot rationally be criticized for envisaging an empurpled future.

Only in one respect can they be said to be facing a potential obstacle. This is the ever-present possibility of a counter-attack by workingmen imbued with the vigilante spirit. Now unfortunately, the word *vigilante* has a peculiarly American connotation. Citizens of this rabid persuasion have appeared more than once on the historical scene when they believed that only

in their own direct-action methods lay the answer to minority rule. They may rise again, goaded by the fact that their jobs, their homes, and their economic security are jeopardized by the class-warfare of a group of Radical opportunists who are motivated by militant political ambitions. Whether such a civic uprising would square with the ideals of democracy is beside the point. Philosophic concepts of democracy are unhappily overshadowed by a man's belief in his inherent right to work for a living, unhampered by Marxian dogma. When, through enforced idleness caused by minority strikers, a non-striking employee is forced to go without food and other necessities, lacking the wage-money to buy them, it is not surprising if he prefers to take things into his own hands, rather than to argue how many evangels may convene on the point of a needle. A vigilante uprising almost occurred in Michigan; such a disaster *can* happen tomorrow in California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, or Louisiana. Given certain conditions of servitude and tyranny, the American workingman has always been

ready to revolt against the dictatorship of professional messiahs.

And here we arrive at an indisputable point which has been stressed many times in these pages — that Fascism and Communism are blood brothers under the skin. Just as Signor Mussolini's triumphant march on Rome was made possible by the seizure of Italian factories by Communist workers, so may it eventuate in this country that continued sabotage by Left-wing labor groups will incite a vigilante uprising — a civilian revolt which can be swiftly converted into outright Fascism by an unscrupulous Leader. In a word, the American Radical himself is not as dangerous to democracy as the reaction he is certain to inspire. If Right-wing Fascism should ever sweep these United States, it will come as the direct outgrowth of the antics now being indulged in from coast to coast by an army of determined political careerists, whose minds and bodies are dedicated to the proposition that, under a New Deal government, a revolutionary minority shall rule the great masses of America's organized labor.



SYPHILIS: MRS. GRUNDY'S DISEASE

BY ANTHONY M. TURANO

ACCORDING to romantic historians, syphilis arose among us as the result of the social amenities attending the discovery of the New World: the Spaniards introduced the Indians to gonorrhea and fire-water, in even exchange for syphilis and tobacco. Without denying the poetic justice of such bartering, other students insist that the pale spirochete was already swimming in Pharaoh's blood stream and hardening his heart when Moses invoked seven other plagues on the Egyptians. But whether the disease is indigenous to America, or imported, it is certain that we have not been remiss in hospitality. At present, 683,000 cases of syphilis are constantly under treatment, and 423,000 new ones arise each year. Since only a fraction of the infections are receiving medical care, their total number is unknown: but the generally accepted estimate is that there are at least 12,000,000 syphilitics now among us; which means that one person in every ten you meet is infected. That the prevalence rate is increasing is indi-

cated by the fact that in New York City alone, the number of persons who sought treatment in the first half of 1936 was ninety-five per cent higher than during the same period the previous year. In short, the complete syphilization of the Republic is a definite possibility during the next few years.

As a source of chronic suffering, syphilis is responsible for such pitiful conditions as locomotor ataxia or *tabes dorsalis*, thousands of cases of blindness, and more than ten per cent of all forms of insanity. As the "great masquerader", it simulates arthritis, nephritis, and every other serious affliction of the nervous, alimentary, and circulatory systems. As a cause of death, it stands a close fifth among such notorious killers as pneumonia, cancer, cerebral hemorrhage, and tuberculosis. Although the fatalities are officially placed at 26,000 a year, the actual number is at least 100,000; for it is understood that doctors frequently ascribe syphilitic demises to more respectable ailments. One of every ten sudden

deaths attributed to "heart trouble" can perhaps be laid to the machinations of syphilitic microbes.

What makes these figures a veritable triumphal arch to human stupidity is the fact that they cannot be charged to any shortcomings of medical knowledge. The sexual origin of syphilis has been known since 1521, when Fracastoro wrote his poem that gave the disease its name. Its onset is usually unmistakable: a small, painless ulcer (chancre) appears at the place of contact, from ten to eighty days after exposure; and six to ten weeks later, this primary lesion is replaced by a generalized rash over the body, commonly accompanied by headache, sore throat, mucous patches in the mouth, and other symptoms. A positive diagnosis can readily be made at any time by use of the Wassermann Test. Furthermore, the specific microbe of syphilis, medically known as *spirochaeta pallida*, was isolated by Schaudinn and Hoffman as early as 1905. Five years later, Ehrlich discovered Salvarsan, which poisons the microscopic offender in the blood stream without harm to the tissues. The original 606 has been since supplemented with Neo-Salvarsan (914) and other preparations of mercury and bismuth. More recent experiments

with diathermy and electric fever promise to cure the most advanced cases. In brief, the general scientific verdict is that if all sufferers were given adequate treatment during the early stages, eighty-six per cent would be easily cured. Although a complete recovery requires at least eighteen months, the weekly or semi-weekly injections do not interfere with the patient's daily occupation, and his condition can be rendered non-communicable within twenty-four to seventy hours.

Unfortunately, however, in Puritanical America, babies are still brought by storks, decent people copulate only in wedded antisepsis, and the pubic region is mentionable nowhere except in alleys and medical colleges. If the existence of sexual diseases is at all recognized, the approved method of dealing with them is by anointing the population with ecclesiastical oils and moral salves. But, since pathogenic germs are more sensitive to chemicals than to homilies, they have managed to multiply with little interference. It follows that, despite its erotic origin, syphilis cannot be called a "venereal" disease without grossly slandering a charming Goddess. The credit for its prevalence belongs to a simpering American lady known as Mrs. Grundy, whose sanctimonious ac-

tivities, as the unintentional shepherdess of the spirochetes, are to be seen in every area of Christian endeavor.

II

One of the favorite Grundian assumptions is that, by thinking good thoughts, adolescents will escape evil and shame the doctors. Every official study shows that the peak age for venereal infection is nineteen for females and twenty-one for males; which ought to suggest that boys will be men, girls will be women, and moral indignation will not mend the ways of microbes. Nevertheless, the textbooks in use in high schools and colleges either ignore syphilis and gonorrhea entirely, or gloss them over with veiled, minimizing definitions. The objection is that in discussing the question, the learned educators might be compelled to admit that the survival of the human race is due to a shameful intromission of the male organ.

In obedience to the same rules of decorum, neither the Associated Press nor the United Press generally allows the words *syphilis*, *gonorrhea*, or *venereal disease* to appear in news dispatches. Except for a few occasional instances of scientific reporting during the past

two years or so, it is the universal opinion of the independent daily press that 100,000 preventable annual deaths should be no part of the social consciousness. Oddly enough, the same organs of public enlightenment do not hesitate to describe daily the absorbent qualities of Kotex, the latest thing in hernia supports, or the best nostrum for hemorrhoids.

An even more exclusive Comstockery prevails in the motion-picture industry. To be sure, the old-time villains and virgins have been largely replaced by ravishing Clark Gables in wicked triangles and the curved smart-crackeries of Mae West. But the squeamish Boards of Censors still refuse to allow the vaguest suggestion of a tainted blood stream. According to the mature wisdom of the Motion Picture Distributors of America, the entire problem belongs in the same prohibited category as white slavery. If a picture dealing with the subject is ever presented, it appears in second-rate play houses, usually under the snickering caveat of "for men only".

But perhaps the outstanding accomplishment of Mrs. Grundy is her maintenance of pristine purity in the ether waves. Two years ago, the National Broadcasting Company prevented Dr. John Levi

Rice, Health Commissioner for New York City, from using the word *syphilis* in a strictly educational speech. Some time later, the Victorian chastity of the nation's radio tubes was preserved inviolate when the Columbia Broadcasting Company refused to allow a soberly scientific lecture by Dr. Thomas Parran, Jr., the present Surgeon General of the United States. The reason in both cases was, of course, the indecency of mentioning copulation to mixed audiences. Presumably, a wave of sexual promiscuity would overtake the Republic if it were generally known to persons of all ages that pathogenic germs may attack the genital region as well as other portions of the body, and that medical remedies are available in each case. It was also argued that the subject is objectionable for aesthetic reasons. But it is equally hard to discover the artistic beauty of the numerous broadcasts about the miraculous power of Eno's salts in emptying the lower bowel, and the magnificent rear action of Ex-Lax. If the moral difference between one biological function and another is any greater than the anatomical distance, the explanation is that the radio stations, like the newspapers, take their cues from advertisers: Salvarsan does

not happen to be a patent medicine.

As the result of this universal conspiracy of silence, a deplorably large section of the citizenry continues to believe that a gonorrheal "dose" is no worse than a cold, that the primary chancre of syphilis is a harmless pimple, and that both are merely the incidental annoyances of masculinity. About four years ago, 445 young men were interrogated at random in the streets and public places of San Francisco, by investigators pretending to be venereally diseased. Only forty-one per cent of those questioned suggested a physician or a clinic. The remainder recommended patent medicines and home remedies, or advised the questioner to "do nothing and you will get well". Again, it was recently found that sixty-three per cent of the drugstores in Chicago offered to cure every kind of venereal infection without benefit of doctors. Another set of prosperous "healers" in the field are the thousands of Chinese herbalists, whose *materia medica* consists of rattlesnake skins, ground lizards, boiled lions' claws, powdered leopard hearts, tree leaves, and vegetable roots. A number of these Oriental magicians who were approached by correspondence two years ago,

promised to diagnose and cure syphilis for \$10, without seeing the patient.

For the usual priggish reasons, the knowledge of the average licensed doctor on the subject is not many degrees above that of the illegitimate Sangrados. The Du Pont Company recently inaugurated a system of blood tests for its 36,800 workers in seventeen States. The infected employees who did not avail themselves of free clinical service were referred to their own family doctors. According to the report of Dr. G. H. Gehrman, medical director of the company, some private physicians attempted to effect cures with "pills and nothing else". Others discharged their patients "after three to ten injections of neoarsphenamine without a heavy metal". Another group refused to believe the Kahn or Wassermann tests: instead of issuing medical prescriptions, they indited certificates of good moral character, testifying that their patients were not the kind of persons "who could have contracted" such a reprehensible disease.

The frequency of stillbirth or miscarriage among untreated syphilitic women is known to every medical student. Even when the child is born alive, the chances are

forty per cent in favor of deformity, contagious sores, blindness, paralysis, mental deficiency, and early death. But if the mother is competently treated during pregnancy, the offspring will be healthy in fully ninety-five per cent of the cases. In obedience to the recommendation of the American Medical Association, a routine blood test is now required in nearly all prenatal hospitals. Nevertheless, only half the physicians in private practice ever resort to such precaution; and the average country doctor is even worse. It would be a breach of medical etiquette to hint that a respectable matron might be suffering, even unknowingly, from an ailment that supposedly never afflicts Nice People. Nor has it yet occurred to any learned legislator to make such negligence a criminal offense.

The result is that three to five per cent of all American infants are born with preventable syphilis. Mrs. Grundy still manages to impose the ancient penalty for moral transgression: "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation". Fortunately, the spirochete itself happens to be relatively intelligent: very few congenital syphilitics live long enough to reproduce their kind.

III

In seven or eight States, statutory attempts have been made to prevent syphilitics from marrying during the communicable stages. But such provisions are inadequate and easily evaded. In Connecticut, for instance, a probate judge may dispense with a Wassermann in particular cases, for reasons of "public policy". Louisiana requires a medical certificate from the *male* applicant only: evidently, the chivalrous lawgivers would rather invite infected offspring than challenge the purity of Southern womanhood. Under the statutes of Washington and Nebraska, the only proof required is an affidavit by the parties and a "disinterested person". In North Dakota, the provision does not apply to a syphilitic swain whose sweetie is past the age of forty-five. The remaining Commonwealths have a variety of picturesque enactments, such as prohibiting a man from marrying "his grandfather's wife". But the free interchange of spirochetes is among the privileges and benefits of holy wedlock.

That "social disease" should not imply sociological concern is also the considered opinion of the learned judges. In some States, the venereal infection of one spouse

does not entitle the other to a divorce. And when a batch of microbes is delivered extra-maritally and *sub rosa*, the judicial precedent in every State is that such contraband consignments are beneath legal concern, because the victim is equally guilty of immorality. So that, while the most innocuous slap on the wrist constitutes assault and battery, there is no redress against the person who deliberately condemns another to slow death.

An even more preposterous confusion between justice and public health is to be seen in the legal policy toward commercial prostitution. About forty per cent of all sexually-acquired afflictions are traceable to underworld Jezebels. Since this ancient occupation cannot be repressed, the obvious remedy ought to be some sort of medico-legal control for the purpose of reducing infection. But the prevailing Grundian notion is that the illicit biological urge can be banished by legislative enactment. Consequently, municipal magistrates are empowered to distribute equal portions of Salvarsan and punishment, without bothering about the results. In one of our large cities, during the past five years, 4277 moral offenders were found to be carriers of venereal

diseases. But only twenty-two per cent of them were sent to hospitals for complete treatment. The other seventy-eight per cent were fined, or jailed, and no attempt was made to cure them or to prevent their subsequent sexual activities. It was also found that the re-arrests of the old offenders had increased 234 per cent; which indicates that the ladies continued to pursue their trade until a new raid brought them again to the bar of justice for punishment and incidental injections. This barbarous whore-baiting, typical of every American community, is supposed to improve national morals and reduce the incidence of syphilis.

IV

A similar legal farce is performed by the various State departments of health, whose special assignment is to guard the citizenry from pathogenic microbes. As recently as 1935, in response to a questionnaire sent out by the United States Health Service, three State boards simply admitted that they had "no venereal disease program", and five others confessed that they were doing nothing about the problem "for lack of funds". In nearly all States, syphilis is reportable in the same manner as scarlet

fever and smallpox, except that a number may be given, instead of the patient's name. But less than half the cases discovered by private physicians are ever reported. Sometimes, an original carrier manages to create what amounts to an epidemic; yet the health officials almost never impose quarantines, and seldom make serious efforts to detect the source of infection.

It is well known that the spirochete is the puniest of all microbes, and can be destroyed by a thorough application of soap and water to the exposed surface. Although self-disinfection can never be as safe as immediate medical aid after exposure, there is no doubt that the intelligent use of a medically-tested rubber sheath, or an ointment containing thirty-three per cent calomel, would greatly reduce the chances of contamination. Nevertheless, forty States and the District of Columbia make no attempt to disseminate the necessary knowledge, or to insure the quality of preventive medicines or devices now on the market. The bigoted fear is that reliable information would make it too easy to sin, without fully collecting the proverbial wages. Some State boards are willing to distribute a few pamphlets, particularly those available gratis from the United States

Health Service; but the literature usually consists of windy tracts on "moral prophylaxis", in which the reader is told that certain unmentionable terrors will somehow overcome him unless he uses "self-control" and remembers "the ideals of patriotism, of conscience and duty".

Because of the high cost of arsenicals, most doctors demand from \$5 to \$10 for every treatment. As Dr. John H. Stokes points out, the lowest expense for a complete cure is \$273, a figure that usually climbs "to \$1425 and up". Consequently, "eighty per cent of the population cannot pay for adequate care of syphilis at private rates". Yet eighteen States and the District of Columbia have no statutory provision for the free distribution of anti-syphilis drugs to physicians or hospitals. Strangely enough, a Wassermann test may now be had without charge in every State chemical laboratory. Presumably, the person who cannot afford immediate treatment may frame his four-plus record as a memento to legal inconsistency.

In a dozen other Commonwealths, free drugs are available for syphilis but not for gonorrhea, even when the same patient suffers from both. Yet the two afflictions are nearly equal in prevalence;

and, although gonorrhea is a local inflammation that does not affect the blood stream, it is responsible for countless chronic conditions of the bladder and kidneys, as well as many cases of arthritis. Its eradication in women frequently involves the surgical removal of the ovaries and Fallopian tubes.

In recent years, the health authorities of about twenty-five States have established some 600 so-called clinics for the treatment of venereal cases. But on the whole, these institutions accomplish very little more than to prevent derelicts with sores from infesting the streets like the lepers of Biblical times. In the seventy-five clinics of Kentucky, for instance, treatment may be had only during the infectious stages of the disease. The same rule applies in the county clinics of Michigan. "The result," says Dr. N. A. Nelson of the Massachusetts Department of Health, "is worse than useless, since inadequate treatment leads to relapse and even greater communicability." According to Drs. Clark and Snow, 2334 persons were registered at the Social Hygiene Clinic of San Francisco during the fiscal year 1931. Only sixty-three of the patients were dismissed as "probably cured"; 885 were released with permission; 1124, nearly half,

were "deserters", and free to contaminate the population.

Moreover, with such notable exceptions as Chicago and Boston, the mass distribution of Salvarsan is for "indigents" only. Respectable patients are herded together with prostitutes and pimps, without regard for privacy or personal dignity. The thousands of sufferers who refuse to submit to such degradation, and cannot pay a private physician, must let the spirochetes have their bodies unmolested. Consequently, as many statistical studies show, the majority of the infected citizenry does not seek treatment until the disease has reached the deadlier and more incurable stages.

This official determination to mix medicine with moral vengeance would be barbarous enough, even if venereal microbes had an exclusive affinity for the genital organs of adulterers. But the truth is that they are no less at home in the circulatory systems of saints and cardinals. Indeed, syphilologists agree that fully one-half of the infections are innocently contracted. The disease is frequently communicated, in the holy bonds of wedlock, by a chiseling mate to the virtuous partner. Quite often, it may be acquired through infected dental instruments, insanitary ra-

zors, water-closet seats, towels, napkins, and handkerchiefs. In a case reported to the Mississippi Health Department, a seventeen-year-old girl who had acquired syphilis sexually, transmitted it innocently to her parents and three brothers and sisters. Two years ago, seventeen syphilitic infections in New York State were traced to a children's party during which two socially prominent youngsters had taken part in kissing games.

V

Now it is not to be denied, from the foregoing, that the various agencies of law, health, and enlightenment have admirably succeeded in convincing the millions of sufferers that sexual infections are not socially approved diseases. But we have seen that the procedure has not served to reduce the tenancy of spirochetes in the national blood stream. That education and medicine are the only rational remedies has been demonstrated by the Scandinavian countries, where the facts are frankly recognized as social menaces.

The chief concerns of the Swedish program, for instance, are widespread discussion, the suppression of quackery, and the substitution of unlimited clinical serv-

ice under conditions consistent with human dignity. Infected individuals who refuse to take treatment, or who discontinue medication, are punishable as socially dangerous persons. New cases are meticulously traced to original sources of infection; and reliable precautionary chemicals are generally available, as a part of an advertising campaign, urging prophylaxis and the necessity of early treatment. Consequently, the prevalence of gonorrhea in Sweden has been reduced fifty per cent during

the last eighteen years, while the annual number of new cases of syphilis has declined from 6000 to 431.

There is no reason to believe that a similar application of common sense will not yield equally good results in America. Will our official and lay moralists ever agree that enforced ignorance will not produce saintly behavior or sound health, and that specific diseases, even when unconventionally acquired, must be cured or prevented by doctors and not deacons?



THE BIRDS

BY FRANCES FROST

THERE in mid-ocean, when the afternoon
Hoisted aloft its tattered signals, breaking
The dark rags out to wind, and waves were hewn
To mountainsides and slowly smashed, and shaking
The vessel leaned its masthead seaward, — there
The birds appeared in chaos, skimmed, descended
Riding the monstrous waters, flaked the air
In silence, fell by no wild voice defended.
And had they nests that lived upon the foam
As drifting kelp, but secret, silver-feathered?
On the wide element they knew their home
Had they a salty covert tempest-weathered?
Unburdened by disasters born of words,
White in the half-night dipped the unknown birds.

THE POISON GAS MYTH

By W. F. KERNAN

DURING the last year of the World War, certain American journalists began to believe in fairies. The delusion that some supreme and deadly invention of Yankee genius would shortly be loosed on the hapless *Boche* first caught the imagination of editorial writers. It soon reached the front pages and was received with reverence by a public that was too tired to doubt. No longer, said the arm-chair strategists, would the waves of devoted doughboys be exposed to the fire of those murderous gunners along the Hindenburg Line: the deadlock on the Western Front would be broken, not with bayonets, but by a new chemical of such malignancy that one whiff reduced flesh to pulp. In this atmosphere of childlike faith and pious hope the legend of poison gas was born.

The chemical whose "discovery" was hailed with such blood-thirsty if naïve enthusiasm was Adamsite, an arsenious compound, known to soldiers simply as DM but to which science has given the

more formidable name, Diphenylaminechlorarsine. Adamsite was not new even in 1918. It was not deadly and, strictly speaking, it was not a gas at all but a solid which dispersed when heated in clouds of fine particles. The story of its origin, proposed tactical employment, and present peace-time use is the best commentary that can be made on the distortion of facts by propagandists to suit the public mood.

The embattled Nordics had been hurling tons of arsenic into the Allied trenches during the Summer of 1917. For this purpose they used a Blue Cross chemical shell which was comparatively innocuous because its explosion did not generate sufficient heat. But in September, 1917, a group of British officers gathered in a dug-out were moved by the spirit of independent research. A Blue Cross dud was opened and an infinitesimal portion of its contents were dropped on a red-hot stove. The result was a minor cataclysm and when the group reassembled in the open air

to discuss symptoms, it was evident to all that a new and important chemical reaction had been discovered.

Further experiments were made by the same officers under conditions more favorable for the advancement of learning, and the following data were accumulated: the German arsenious compound when "heat-treated" was intolerable to normal human beings in concentrations of one part of the solid to one million parts of air; and it would also penetrate any gas mask hitherto devised. The British Gas Directorate was immediately informed and the London Ph.D.'s set to work at the point where the intrepid trench experimenters had left off. Three months later a box of DM and a thermogenerator for its effective use arrived at GHQ. This was the famous "M Device" which caused more unintelligent comment than any gadget in France outside the *Musée de Cluny*.

The tactical object of the M Device was the generation of a colossal cloud of heated arsenic which would descend on the German trenches, soak in for ten minutes, and then evaporate in time to let the Allied infantry through. The Americanos were also taken into the secret and our own factories

began manufacturing Adamsite for all they were worth. The stage was set for the greatest offensive in history.

And now, having due regard for recent pacifist vociferations on the subject of arsenical compounds, there is a question that must be squarely met. What exactly did the war chemists of the Entente expect of this deadly cloud against which the enemy had practically no protection?

Adamsite is a sternutator, not a lethal gas. That is to say, it causes violent sneezing, coughing, nausea, vomiting, and headache. Any German, even the Nietzschean *Übermensch*, who passed through one of these arsenate clouds would certainly be in a bad way for three or four hours and during this time it would be a matter of complete indifference to him whether Foch took the eagles off the Brandenburg Gate or Pershing pitched pup-tents in the *Siegesallee*. But he would not die; nor would his eyes, ears, heart, lungs, or liver be affected. The next day, believe it or not, he would be able to go about his lawful occasions without discoverable injury.

The arsenate cloud, however, was never used against the Germans, for the war was over before Adamsite could be manufactured

in sufficient quantities to insure the success of a large scale attack along the whole Front. At the present time it is a commercial product, highly esteemed by the police who use it to put the fear of God into mobs and gangsters. It is the crowning paradox of the war-phobia that the bogey of the pseudo-scientists has turned out to be the most humane weapon ever invented by man.

II

After the Armistice, an uncritical humanitarianism, following close on the heels of uncritical patriotism, adopted most of the myths and tall stories of 1918. Pacifism in particular, becoming enamored of the Gas Legend, took out a patent on it and began a careful build-up of mystery and terror around the subject of chemical warfare. Today, the public, whose ideas of military technique are largely derived from the celestial mechanics of Buck Rogers, the comic-strip hero, is content simply to believe.

"If he is lucky, a million men will die", reads the caption of a picture that appeared recently in the advertising sections of the more high-brow magazines. Here a bespectacled young chemist is shown amidst a bristling array of test

tubes and retorts. At the behest of some "merchant of death", he is searching for a new gas and when he finds it, "planes will zoom over cities and towns, children will fall down strangling from one breath of air that a second ago had been pure and sweet". Thus *World Peaceways*, an international organization for the prevention of war, mourns in the vein of Jeremiah over the destruction that is being prepared for us by the succubi of the laboratories. Thus also laments that *ami du peuple*, Mr. H. G. Wells, whose *History of the Next Hundred Years* foresees entire nations rendered impotent (together with their male dogs and cats) by horrible "sterilizing inhalations" dropped from the clouds.

But we reach, perhaps, the all-time high of overstatement in a feature article which a New York paper published under the following caption:

1000 POISON GASES AVAILABLE FOR WAR. UNPRECEDENTED MASSACRES IN THE NEXT GREAT CONFLICT ARE PREDICTED.

The author observed:

One of the most terrible gases is one which causes a fatal lesion of the heart, but which is entirely painless in its effects, so that the victim remains ignorant of his fate until he drops dead.

This is the sweetly solemn sort of news that the public laps up; and lest some Caspar Milquetoast should suffer a lesion in his cardiac region even as he reads these lines, I hasten to add that no such war gas has ever existed either on land or sea or in the caverns under the earth. Indeed, so far from there being 1000 poison gases, there are not ten toxic chemicals whose war value has been clearly established.

It is true enough that the pharmacopœia of poisons contains some 200,000 organic compounds known to the Chemical Warfare Service as "possibles", from which agents are constantly being selected for laboratory test and field trial. But it is also true that after twenty years of research carried on in every nation of the world, the war gases can still be counted on the fingers of both hands. The reason lies, of course, in the fact that the mere toxicity of a gas is not the main point in determining its efficiency as a weapon.

Take for example mustard, the "king of the war gases", also called Yperite. In 1917, mustard was the deadliest gas known to the military chemist; and today, contrary to the general belief, it is still the deadliest gas. Its toxic action is threefold: at its smallest concentration it is a tear gas or lachrymator;

at still higher concentrations it is a vesicant and inflicts burns on the skin; and finally it is a pulmonary irritant of such malignancy that it has been known to slay 3,000,000 times its weight in living matter. Twenty milligrams of mustard quickly absorbed into the lungs of a man will result in death. Hence the statement is often made that one ton of mustard will kill 45,000,000 men — which contains about the same amount of truth as the other horror stories in current circulation. Statistics show that during the period of its use in the World War, that is from July, 1917, until the Armistice, it took slightly more than one and one-half tons of mustard to cause one death. Moreover, for every victim claimed by this deadliest of gases, the machine-gun swept away twelve lives and the high explosive shell accounted for seven. What is the explanation?

Mustard, or dichlorethyl sulphide, is a compound that freezes at 57° F. and boils at 443° F. It is the least volatile of all war gases. This characteristic has a profound tactical significance that has completely escaped the experts of the press. It means that the gas mask gives complete protection against eye and lung irritations. More specifically, it means that mustard

cannot be used as a cloud gas (like Adamsite) and that its real danger area lies only in the immediate vicinity of the shell or bomb explosion. In other words, if you try to put out any concentration stronger than one-half ounce of mustard per 1000 cubic feet of air, your "gas" simply drops to the ground as a liquid or as a solid. In Germany, children in grammar school know these things. They know also that all the bombing planes of the world could not transport enough mustard to annihilate a city like Berlin.

Next to mustard in deadliness, but at the upper limit of the volatility range, is phosgene (carbonyl chloride), a British discovery first used in large-scale cloud attacks at Arras in April, 1917. Later, the Germans mixed it with hydrocyanic gas and wrought great havoc among the Italians whose gas masks in those halcyon days were of the self-ventilating, pre-Mussolini type. Phosgene enjoys the additional distinction of being the only gas of American manufacture actually used by Americans at the front. In fact, our generals liked it so well that 1616 tons of it were manufactured in this country before the Armistice put a stop to such infernal business.

If troops are in the open, unpro-

tected and unwarned, phosgene is a good tactical weapon. But such considerations have little or no bearing on the use of phosgene as a filler for aerial bombs in an attack on the civilian population.

Mustard gas is not volatile enough. Phosgene, which is also a lung irritant of great toxicity, is too volatile for the attack of cities. Of course, if you wanted to bomb New York with phosgene or any similar chemical such as chlorine or chloropicrin, theoretically you could do so. I mean that, from a chemical warfare standpoint, with a fair set of bombing planes, complete air-superiority, and all anti-aircraft artillery barred, you could actually build up a conditionally lethal concentration over the entire metropolitan district of Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx.

Without going into all the figures, it would require about four tons of phosgene per square mile. But such a concentration would be fatal only if breathed for an hour without gas mask protection. Clever New Yorkers who had provided themselves with "respirators" (Berlin department stores now sell them for \$7.50) could move about the streets with perfect immunity. All others, provided they were gifted with a

modicum of sense, could keep their precious lungs undamaged by the simple expedient of going inside and keeping all doors and windows closed for a half-hour. The phosgene cloud dissipates very rapidly.

From the above it is possible for the most illogical mind to draw an important inference. In his search for toxic gases, the war chemist is limited by two completely independent factors: the concentration of the gas in the air (volatility) and the time of exposure, which has to do with open-air, not chamber toxicity. Persistent gases like mustard and Lewisite which have high boiling points and low vapor pressures cannot be obtained in the air in high concentrations. Gases of the phosgene, chlorine type are so volatile that they vanish before their lethal action can make itself felt inside a gas mask or a closed room. Arsenate chemicals like Adamsite, which are very penetrative and require only a few sec-

onds to act, are not lethal. The tear gases proper, like brombenzylcyanide, need not be considered, for what dictator in his senses would risk his air fleet merely to make Broadway weep or to set Park Avenue a-sneezing.

Thus when the alarmist argues that because gas is effective against troops in the field, it would *a fortiori* be even more effective against the inhabitants of cities, he is guilty of a particularly vicious fallacy: the syllogism in four terms. Gas is certainly a tactical weapon of the first order, though it is not at all inhumane. On the other hand, as an instrument for the annihilation of cities, gas is not a weapon in any accepted sense of the word. Its use for such a purpose would be in flagrant violation, not of the Law of Nations, but of the principle of economy of effort, which generals will continue to observe long after every protocol of the League of Nations has been consigned to the dead-letter file.



YOU CAN'T BE UNLUCKY

BY CHANNING POLLOCK

THERE are millions of people on this planet today who believe that success in life is won by lifting a glass, shaking dice, flipping a coin, or, more generally, through that mystical concatenation of circumstances known as "the breaks". But of the rigid and unvarying requirements of aptitude, training, labor, patience, perseverance, humility, courage, and initiative, they are ignorant as infants and as skeptical as a Houdini at a séance. Edna Ferber said recently that she receives hundreds of letters from people who want to be writers, but none from people who want to write. And that has been the experience of most men and women who have won prominence as authors, actors, artists, engineers, or in business. My own files are loaded with such communications: "Dear sir, I red a lot of magasean articals that I could do better if I got the chance". . . . "If you would send me a letter of introduction". . . . "Please tell me how to get on the stage". . . . "I'm enclosing a play that I wrote in a

week. Kindly let me know what to do with it now". . . . As though the answer to that appeal *could* be kind!

It isn't, however, only the tyros who think golden apples are wind-falls. "He's a lucky beggar," one physician said to me of another, not long ago. That other, a celebrated surgeon, was the son of a cobbler. As a boy, he sold newspapers all day, and studied at night. Even after he had won his scholarship and entered a university, he held down three jobs, apart from graduating with honors. "My average day now," he told me, "begins at six a.m. in the hospital. Usually I've done from five to eight operations before I get to my office. There, between one and seven, I see about thirty patients. It takes a lot of planning and system, of course. A fellow must keep fit, too. So I do without most things I like, and watch my diet and exercise. Evenings? Well, I go out sometimes, but usually I read medical books or magazines. There are so many new things;

you've got to keep up with 'em if you don't want to slip back." And this man is called a "lucky beggar"!

It's a dangerous thing — faith in luck. It discourages effort, and breeds envy and discontent. Endeavor halts when men think they've found an easier way to success. Nowadays an increasing number of us are being taught to lean on Government. Failure isn't our fault; the other fellow's success *is* our fault. We merely let him "get away with it". If he earned money, it was because of "special privilege". If he saved, that was "greed". All wealth is "predatory wealth", and all superiority a matter of superior opportunity. If we are shiftless, if we spend more than we earn and get into debt, it is our creditors who should suffer. Whatever the mistakes we make, or whatever effort we don't make, we shall be looked after by Washington. What price success? Why, it's only luck!

My own estimate of the part luck plays in life is about five per cent. The American Iron and Steel Institute recently published a compendium of the careers of principal figures in the industry: Andrew Carnegie began as a bobbin boy in a cotton mill; Judge Gary was a poor farmer's son who

worked his way up to the chairmanship of United States Steel; Charles M. Schwab started as a stake-driver for an engineering corps; William A. Irvin, chairman of United States Steel, was a shipping clerk; E. G. Grace, president of Bethlehem, a crane operator; and so on down the list.

It seems to me that there are just two kinds of men in the world: those who bring home bulging brief-cases, and those who bring home cross-word puzzles. The cross-word puzzlers, and other time-wasters, can never understand why the brief-casers leave them behind. The most reasonable explanation I ever saw was in the unconscious irony of a sign that hung in a Fifth Avenue shop in the days of the NRA — "No one in this establishment works more than forty hours a week, except executives".

Well, no one ever got to be an executive—or anything else worthwhile—by working a forty-hour week. Most of the notable people I know are trying to manage a forty-hour day. It is the idle, wasteful, discontented citizen—the firm believer in luck—who never gets anywhere. You see him on the streets or in the subway, his patent-leather hair plastered down, his chief concern his clothing, half-

asleep after a night of partying, and you sense his certainty that only "the breaks" have kept him from being Chairman of the Board. You meet him in Union Square, sprawled on a bench, bleary with drink, telling the world that the inequalities of the Capitalistic System have made him the man he is. These same inequalities, however, haven't prevented a good many useful and prosperous citizens from being the men *they* are.

II

I quote from two letters that reached me this week. Both writers are aspirants for histrionic honors. One writes:

Thanks for Lewes' book on acting. Its instructions are of another day, but I learned something. . . . I called at fourteen offices this afternoon, walking to save carfare. I go to most of them every day. Some day, somebody'll walk out of an inside office who wants just my type.

The other says:

Mrs. Blank (a celebrated actress) can't teach me anything. I've a better idea of Shakespeare than she has. . . . I blew in five dollars on a rose-colored chiffon nightgown. . . . I'd an offer of a week's work with a stock company, but don't see that it would get me anywhere. . . . There might be a chance for me in Leslie Howard's *Hamlet* if you'd send a note to

Howard. Do you know anyone at the Theater Guild?

Which of these two is going to be lucky?

Then there's young John Brown. His mother, who has arthritis, is out looking for a job for him, but John hasn't any luck. Fred Green has decided to be an advertising manager, and is studying an hour a day. He recently informed me that one of the topnotchers in that field owed his position to influence. Another young friend of mine has been balked by having a Jewish name. I told him that didn't check Einstein, or Israel Zangwill, or Jesse Isidor Straus.

In all my experience, I've never seen an instance of ill fortune for which there wasn't sound, matter-of-fact reason. For some time I thought that Gus White, a relative of mine, who was supposed to have ability, industry, and perseverance, and yet failed at almost everything, was the long-sought exception. Then, one day, I entrusted Gus with some business. He handled it in such a slipshod way that I'm still involved in the consequences. I began looking over his past. That law suit that nearly plunged him into bankruptcy—the contract contained several clauses he failed to read. That trust he'd administered for an elderly female friend

— not a bit of doubt that he'd done the job honestly, but the lady is still trying to get an accounting. Gus put his savings into a bank that failed, and that everyone else knew would fail, and lost his home because he neglected to take out title insurance. He's an unlucky guy, Gus.

As I said before, this faith in luck is alarmingly altering the psychology of America. An article I published recently concerning the absurdities of the Townsend Plan brought me more than seven hundred abusive letters. Practically all were written around the theme: "I'll bet you get more than fifty dollars a week." True, but America is forgetting the distinction between getting money and earning it. Ever increasingly, America becomes scornful of success, because America is being taught that every man is as good as his neighbor, or better, and that every man who isn't as bad as his neighbor, or as lucky, misses the brass ring. I can pick out an unlucky man in thirty seconds. So can anyone else who has had experience with humanity. "Generally," a great employer confided to me, "I know whether a chap's going to be lucky enough to get the job before he opens his mouth. I can judge by his socks, and his fin-

gernails, and the way he sits in his chair." I can judge by his conceit, or humility; by his attitude toward life and his job. I recall the tale of the man who asked Mozart how to write symphonies. "You're pretty young," Mozart answered. "Why not try ballads first?"

"You wrote symphonies," the aspirant urged, "when you were ten years old."

"Yes," said Mozart, "but I didn't ask how."

III

One last story comes to mind as I go back through forty years of increasing skepticism about luck. On an afternoon in 1913, I sat with a group of dejected theatrical men in a hotel café in Detroit. We had come for the *première* of a musical comedy starring the late Raymond Hitchcock. We were due to "ring up" in two hours—but Hitchy had lost his voice, every whisper of it. Should we turn away the first-night audience, or give the performance in pantomime?

While we were debating, our waiter said: "If you'll take something I'll mix for you, Mr. Hitchcock, you'll be all right long before curtain time."

Hitchy nodded assent.

Five minutes later, the man

brought a tall glass of brownish fluid, which the comedian drank. Within half an hour, his voice was clear and strong.

"Where did you learn about that secret drink?" Sam Harris, one of our managers, asked the waiter.

"At Johns Hopkins," the man answered. "I took my M.D. there."

All of us turned to him in astonishment.

"Why aren't you practicing?" I asked.

"Well, it's a precarious profession," the waiter answered. "Sir Henry Irving offered me an assured income, and I acted as his courier for several years. You see, I speak five languages."

Skeptical, I asked a question in German, another of the party one in French, a third one in Spanish. The waiter's replies put our pronunciation to shame.

When he had gone, Hitchy said: "I'm going to give that fellow a job. He'd be handy to have around."

"I wouldn't do that," George Cohan warned.

"Why?"

"He's too clever," George explained. "When anyone knows as much as that chap, and continues to be a waiter, there's a reason."

"Bad luck, perhaps," Sam Harris suggested.

"There isn't that much bad luck in the world," his partner argued. "Bad luck's mostly a good alibi."

"Do you mean," I put in, "that you don't believe in luck?"

"Sure, I believe in it," George answered. "We've all had bad luck — and we've all licked it. So does everyone who's got anything in him. I'll bet tonight's supper for the crowd that if this waiter is all the things he says he is, the reason he's wrestling dishes has something to do with his own character or capacity."

We took the bet, and went upstairs to see the hotel manager.

"We're interested in one of your waiters —" Cohan began.

"Number Twenty-One?"

"How did you know?"

The manager smiled. "Everybody's interested in Twenty-One," he said. "You want to know if he *is* a doctor, and whether he was a courier for Irving. The answer is 'yes'. But we're letting him go Saturday. He's a dope addict."

From that day to this, I've never heard a hard-luck story without doing a little investigating. In all that time, I've never found one authentic case where bad luck kept a good man down. Or where good luck was of permanent value to anybody who didn't make it himself.

I BELIEVE IN THE DOUBLE STANDARD

BY A WIFE

THE psychic earthquake which usually sends a "wronged wife" Home to Mother, off to the divorce court, down to the drug-store for the heroic hemlock, or into the arms of another man, omitted none of its habitual horrors in my case. I felt that the end of the world had come.

And it had. That carefully contrived orb of taboo and tradition which I shared with other wives lay shattered around me. I wondered how, and if, I could ever rise from the ruins. Did I? Well, let the phoenix look to its laurels! For since then I have built another world, infinitely superior to my Paradise Well-Lost. It revolves around the damned but undying principle of the Double Standard; and in it my errant male is more than a mere husband—he is a human being.

For, under our arrangement, my husband can go where he wants, with whom he wants, when he wants. Just because he's married doesn't mean he has to be a mummy. That other women are

necessary to his personal requirements comes under the head of *his* business. I do not crowd him with jealous questions, nor cramp his style with suspicious spying. What he wants me to know, he tells me; his frequent confidences are frank and free from deceit. There are no sinister secrets between us. His sex-life is his, to live as he chooses; I am not a slave-owner, holding his body in bondage to impracticable vows. And, on the other hand, though I adhere from choice to the ways of wifely virtue, I am completely free in my own life too.

Let me not give the impression that I evolved this uxorial Utopia casually. No woman can play the "model wife" for nearly a decade and then watch with cool unconcern while her leading man stalks onto the stage with a competing chorus. She thinks that she alone should have the spotlight of his affection, and if she is shunted slightly to the side by new talent—well, it's tears or a tantrum. For my part, I carefully avoided cheap scenes; but there were days, and

nights, when I bitterly brooded over scented letters, unfamiliar bills, and contraband accessories discovered in the pockets of discarded suits—times when I could have screamed to drown out the unwelcome stories whispered by prurient friends who “thought I ought to know”. Finally, it was when I met by chance one of his women friends—a plump blonde with an obvious permanent and a battery of irregular verbs—that resentment gave way to reason and I determined to figure my husband out before I put him out. I was still trim though thirty, educated, ambitious, affectionate, and virtuous. Presumably I had my quota of what it takes to keep a man. Why, then, was my mate’s emotional stability so often upset by some feather-brained female? That one curt question brought my problem to a head. Yes, precisely *why*?

First of all, I shed myself of sham and faced the issue with both eyes open. My husband’s conduct, the unsought opinion of outsiders to the contrary, was something neither new, nasty, nor abnormal. Lameck, seventh descendant of Adam, “took to himself two wives”, Solomon had his classic concubines, the latest tabloid tales of Hollywood husbands show hearts gone haywire. There is no

evidence either in the past or the present to prove that a man should be sentenced to a life-term with one mate. Even science has demonstrated that the much-maligned impulses which propel a man into adultery are compounded of chemical forces above and beyond his volition. Nature, never niggardly when she is in earnest, has burdened him with billions of boisterous spermatozoa constantly clamoring for release: like so many little whips, they relentlessly lash him on to love. Consequently his subconscious imperative is to assume as his personal duty the ambitious program outlined for his kind in the first chapter of Genesis. Now, how is one normally-sexed woman to handle this extravagant energy? She can’t. If she is sensible, she will accept assistance. She will admit that the average man is not chemically conditioned to be a one-woman commodity, and recognize that a rough balance is the best that can ever be struck between his outward public deeds and his inner glandular secretions.

All right. If this proneness to philander is something that can’t be helped, then why are we women unwilling to accept it along with the color of a man’s hair? Simply because we are oppositely constituted. Our physiological structure

makes love for us primarily a medium of motherhood (nature makes no distinction between actual and potential), and only secondarily an adventure in sensation. A woman—unless her normal urges have been misguided into *mores* that are likely to leave her more muddled than “modern”—is careful, conservative, choosy, instinctively concerned with the mate as protector and with the home as the hereditary haven of the race. To a man, stripped of the sentiment in which the family as a social unit has seen fit to envelop him, home is purely a place in which to feed and breed. As someone has succinctly said, destiny’s command to man is: “Impregnate!”—to woman: “Discriminate!” And we hapless females can curse until we are blue in the face, but we cannot change our fate a tittle.

II

It is not quite fair, however, to pin *all* the blame for a husband’s misdeeds on a harmless hormone. We wives ourselves are often unwittingly guilty. Either through ignorance or indifference, we do nothing to soft-pedal the prosaic machinery of what Arthur Schopenhauer calls “the unnatural in-

stitution of monogamy”. We are too busy or too blind to see anything wrong with a situation sufficient in itself to send a man off to his mistress of the moment, or in time to the madhouse. Yet unmodified marriage is emotional mayhem. There is, first and foremost, that dismal, deadly intimacy, always uninspiring, sometimes sordid. Can romance survive an unbroken regime of soggy bath-towels, bilious breakfast manners, double beds, and soiled baby clothes? Can illusion linger amidst acrimonious arguments about rents and budgets and clothes and repairs and groceries and bills and childbirth? What need I say about the incapacities of pregnancy? Is there anything about all this that would nurture in any man an undying passion—except a passion to get away from it all?

Then there is the sex relationship, the dullest spot in the domestic story. Coitus is “enjoyed” with the medically prescribed regularity of monotonous twice-weekly sessions, mechanically and without glamor. The unoriginal wife doesn’t know that her husband’s physical interest in her may be kept alive or starved according to the degree of artifice with which she plays her part in the love-drama. Does she attempt to attach

any appearance of spontaneity or enthusiasm or heart-hunger to the act? "No," as James Oppenheim dolefully sang, "kisses are become to them a routine and a duty: they find each other's bodies at midnight as they find breakfast in the morning. . . ."

What is more natural? Any form of continued sensory stimulation, whether it be the enjoyment of a great symphony or a great passion, must eventually deflate into a condition of either stupor or neurasthenia. Orthodox marriage is no exception to the rule. Even the most complex sex personalities are reduced to humdrum reiteration. I have seen wistful wives poring avidly over lurid chapters in pornographic books "intended for the medical profession only", searching vicariously for the thrills denied them by a tired technique. Men, too, need variety in sex, as they do in food: the love-menu must be spiced to pique the appetite. My worldly husband brings surprises and diversions to our intimate hours — variations which vegetable Mr. Jones, who rarely spends an evening outside his armchair and plush slippers, has probably never suspected, much less learned. The art of intercourse, like any other art, should be practiced to be perfected; and a man in

his prime need not be a sexual athlete to improve his skill with the help of more than one partner. Call my mate a libertine if you wish — but to me he is a lover *de luxe*.

Personally, I have no quarrel with a world that says "Yes" to men and "No" to women. I am far happier in my present state of pseudo-monogamy than I ever was in the days when I was my husband's unrivaled handmaiden. The arrangement has distinct advantages — physical, cultural, spiritual, sexual — for all concerned, including, I hope, the fond, foolish females who have pleased the hero of the piece. To name just one physical benefit: our mode of marriage has certainly kept both me and my husband youthful. *He* knows that bay-windows and baldness neither signify beauty nor seduce it, and *I* know I can't afford to get fat and frowsy if I expect to keep in the race. That "there's nothing that keeps a woman young like a fresh love affair" is even more axiomatic if the love affair happens to be her husband's. I've found that keen competition is as needful in the business of love as in any other business.

My husband is acutely appreciative of me because he is allowed to retain his rights; his duties he dis-

charges with zest. As for myself, the time I might have used to play "pity the poor martyr", I now turn to personal improvement. I do my best to keep myself attractive and mentally fit — and so incidentally manage to keep *his* sense of prideful possession constantly on the alert. On the other hand, it is an orchid to my vanity to know that here is a man whom many women want, and I—the queen of the seraglio—have him! He is not henpecked and I am not bored. We are frequently apart; therefore we find (like Keats, who used to put pepper in his mouth so the wine would taste the cooler) that the hours we spend together are so much the fuller, fresher, and friendlier. We are spared the horrors of forced cohabitation.

III

All of which quite naturally raises a great many questions. Good. I can answer them.

Don't I object to my husband's spending money on other women? Why should I? What he spends is his—the pitiful pittance remaining after the demands of the family are satisfied. Besides, shouldn't the woman who serves my husband's pleasure be paid as well as the cook who prepares his meals?

And what about the children?

Is it not better to accept Father's philandering with a dash of philosophy than to wrangle the whole family into disruption? It is a child's inalienable right not only to be brought up by its progenitors, but by a father and mother who know how to behave like thinking adults instead of moonstruck adolescents.

Why don't I divorce him?

Heavens, no! Some of us hustle off in a huff to the divorce court — unmindful that most divorces which follow occasional adulteries are economic, emotional, sexual, and spiritual tragedies for both partners; and that the most a woman, provided she loves her husband, gains by divorce is a dour discovery of what she has lost.

But am I not afraid of losing him? You hold a man by letting him go; you don't have to lose him simply because you loose him. He knows as well as you do that the type of attraction which might justify a week-end lark does not furnish substantial foundation for a lifetime of co-operation.

But such a marriage is immoral!

Tut, tut. Isn't every marriage immoral? Isolating the male and female of the species from the rest of the world, and surrounding the pair with legal protection and an

aura of holiness, combines, as George Bernard Shaw has aptly observed, the maximum of temptation with the highest conceivable amount of opportunity. Can you imagine any arrangement that affords greater possibility for immoderate indulgence? Is a subconscious suffering from spiritual castration a basis of morality?

Am I not afraid my husband will bring home a venereal disease? When a man follows a routine of regular prophylaxis, he is safer than his goody-goody brother: the well-informed modern mind views syphilis and gonorrhea as products of micro-organisms instead of the wrath of God — hence a problem in preventive medicine, and not punitive theology. Besides, a man's sole means of unloading his lust is no longer some painted disaster of the District. "Nice" girls — like pretty Miss Tomkins who does the filing in your husband's office — are not averse to a little erotic adventure. Since women are smarter, sex is safer.

What pangs of jealousy and pride I must suffer! On the contrary, my husband's other women are jealous of *me*. I am the chief concubine in this hypothetical harem, the king's favorite, the matrix of his legitimate heirs.

Are you sure your husband loves

you? Ha! I was waiting for that. Society concludes that a restive husband has lost romantic interest in his mate because people do not differentiate between connubial affection and spasmodic sex-attraction. This is another one of those things that the Greeks, with their wives in the home and their *heterae* on the sly, had a name for. I have come to know that, even in this era of limited offspring and unlimited pleasure, sex is basically a matter of recreation for men, procreation for women, and that my husband does not love me less because he takes his fun where he finds it. At any rate, if all I could wish for in the way of material comfort, if tenderness, understanding, consideration, kindness, and never-failing attention are not proofs of a genuine attachment, then I can well live without that elusive quantity called Love.

Yes, I am happy. A man can have a much worse failing than a congenital weakness for women: drunkenness, for instance, or gambling, cruelty, social irresponsibility, perversion, sexual incompetence. I do not begrudge my mate his little mortal moments. Our arrangement works perfectly. I think the Double Standard should be made mandatory in the Marriage Vow.

ONE HUNDRED PER CENT AMERICAN

BY RALPH LINTON

THERE can be no question about the average American's Americanism or his desire to preserve this precious heritage at all costs. Nevertheless, some insidious foreign ideas have already wormed their way into his civilization without his realizing what was going on. Thus dawn finds the unsuspecting patriot garbed in pajamas, a garment of East Indian origin; and lying in a bed built on a pattern which originated in either Persia or Asia Minor. He is muffled to the ears in un-American materials: cotton, first domesticated in India; linen, domesticated in the Near East; wool from an animal native to Asia Minor; or silk whose uses were first discovered by the Chinese. All these substances have been transformed into cloth by methods invented in Southwestern Asia. If the weather is cold enough he may even be sleeping under an eiderdown quilt invented in Scandinavia.

On awakening he glances at the clock, a medieval European invention, uses one potent Latin word in

abbreviated form, rises in haste, and goes to the bathroom. Here, if he stops to think about it, he must feel himself in the presence of a great American institution: he will have heard stories of both the quality and frequency of foreign plumbing and will know that in no other country does the average man perform his ablutions in the midst of such splendor. But the insidious foreign influence pursues him even here. Glass was invented by the ancient Egyptians, the use of glazed tiles for floors and walls in the Near East, porcelain in China, and the art of enameling on metal by Mediterranean artisans of the Bronze Age. Even his bathtub and toilet are but slightly modified copies of Roman originals. The only purely American contribution to the ensemble is the steam radiator, against which our patriot very briefly and unintentionally places his posterior.

In this bathroom the American washes with soap invented by the ancient Gauls. Next he cleans his teeth, a subversive European prac-

tice which did not invade America until the latter part of the eighteenth century. He then shaves, a masochistic rite first developed by the heathen priests of ancient Egypt and Sumer. The process is made less of a penance by the fact that his razor is of steel, an iron-carbon alloy discovered in either India or Turkestan. Lastly, he dries himself on a Turkish towel.

Returning to the bedroom, the unconscious victim of un-American practices removes his clothes from a chair, invented in the Near East, and proceeds to dress. He puts on close-fitting tailored garments whose form derives from the skin clothing of the ancient nomads of the Asiatic steppes and fastens them with buttons whose prototypes appeared in Europe at the close of the Stone Age. This costume is appropriate enough for outdoor exercise in a cold climate, but is quite unsuited to American Summers, steam-heated houses, and Pullmans. Nevertheless, foreign ideas and habits hold the unfortunate man in thrall even when common sense tells him that the authentically American costume of gee string and moccasins would be far more comfortable. He puts on his feet stiff coverings made from hide prepared by a process invented in ancient Egypt and cut to a pat-

tern which can be traced back to ancient Greece, and makes sure they are properly polished, also a Greek idea. Lastly, he ties about his neck a strip of bright-colored cloth which is a vestigial survival of the shoulder shawls worn by seventeenth-century Croats. He gives himself a final appraisal in the mirror, an old Mediterranean invention, and goes downstairs to breakfast.

Here a whole new series of foreign things confronts him. His food and drink are placed before him in pottery vessels, the popular name of which — china — is sufficient evidence of their origin. His fork is a medieval Italian invention and his spoon a copy of a Roman original. He will usually begin the meal with coffee, an Abyssinian plant first discovered by the Arabs. The American is quite likely to need it to dispel the morning-after effects of over-indulgence in fermented drinks, invented in the Near East; or distilled ones, invented by the alchemists of medieval Europe. Whereas the Arabs took their coffee straight, he will probably sweeten it with sugar, discovered in India; and dilute it with cream, both the domestication of cattle and the technique of milking having originated in Asia Minor.

If our patriot is old-fashioned enough to adhere to the so-called American breakfast, his coffee will be accompanied by an orange, domesticated in the Mediterranean region, a cantaloupe domesticated in Persia, or grapes, domesticated in Asia Minor. He will follow this with a bowl of cereal made from grain domesticated in the Near East and prepared by methods also invented there. From this he will go on to waffles, a Scandinavian invention, with plenty of butter, originally a Near-Eastern cosmetic. As a side dish he may have the egg of a bird domesticated in South-eastern Asia or strips of the flesh of an animal domesticated in the same region, which have been salted and smoked by a process invented in Northern Europe.

Breakfast over, he places upon his head a molded piece of felt, invented by the nomads of Eastern Asia, and, if it looks like rain, puts on outer shoes of rubber, discov-

ered by the ancient Mexicans, and takes an umbrella, invented in India. He then sprints for his train—the train, not the sprinting, being an English invention. At the station he pauses for a moment to buy a newspaper, paying for it with coins invented in ancient Lydia. Once on board he settles back to inhale the fumes of a cigarette invented in Mexico, or a cigar invented in Brazil. Meanwhile, he reads the news of the day, imprinted in characters invented by the ancient Semites by a process invented in Germany upon a material invented in China. As he scans the latest editorial pointing out the dire results to our institutions of accepting foreign ideas, he will not fail to thank a Hebrew God in an Indo-European language that he is a one hundred per cent (decimal system invented by the Greeks) American (from Americus Vespucci, Italian geographer).



DEATH OF A LADY

A Story

BY EDWARD HARRIS HETH

IN THE ninth year, the long lazy Summer ended and the early-September mornings already deceitful with warmthless sunlight, it was agreed that she should finish her remaining years in whatever peace she chose. In the last year she had grown a tumor, not malignant, beneath her third left dug; her coat, despite daily brushing, was losing its glisten, a dull paint-like black replacing the once-ebony sheen. And in those last hot Summer months a black bald spot had spread on her shank. She had littered six times with savage patience and love, the last two times almost ending her days with eclampsia, yet each time fixing us day after day from her stall at the vet's with sore, begging eyes, the round deep eyes that gave her such dignity and wisdom, till by savage resistance she restored herself to health. So in her ninth year should we ask anything more of her, she who had already lived more fully than any of us?

She was given the run of the house. She was never again ordered to play dead, beg, or retrieve a much-chewed rubber ball. She was taken for exercise only when she herself asked for it, waddling to the door of the closet where the harness and leash hung, seating herself on her bulky terrier haunches and waiting with up-raised head, tongue lopping sideways through her black lips, eyes blinking until one of us reached the harness and leash from the hook. She rose to her four feet then, turned about, and waited with bowed head.

She did not greet the outside with the noisy yelping of her earlier days. Gustly, tarnished rain did not make her hesitate, nor brittle sunshine yip in expectation. She went calmly, no longer bristling her coat or snapping up her ears at sight of other dogs — knowing fully her supremacy to them — and at the end of the block simply looking up at the human at the

other end of the leash with a dim, cursory smile — *well, do you want to turn back?* She waited; it was never the master who led her back; after a moment's wait, and a none-too-interested survey of who was boarding the streetcar, who carried what from the corner drug-store, who were the day's associates of King, the black, sleek, stupid Doberman pinscher who lay all day in the sun by the drug-store entrance, sleepily snapping at neighborhood dogs as they passed, she retraced her steps, sniffing at the places she had watered on the outward journey, halting stock-still and momentarily preoccupied with an early-Autumn leaf sliding down the sidewalk, but giving it no more attention than that moment's paralyzed gaze. The last few feet she even quickened her pace and once past the hedge half began to run, as though in haste to put the outside world behind her, padding up the stairs with rapid, thuddy steps, her tongue slipping sideways through her niggery lips until she re-entered the house. Having lapped from her water basin, she hopped with one swift, still-easy leap into her low bed. And once in bed twirled herself round, scuffing up the rag-blanket, sniffing — the days in the field, the high sweet grass, the

moist cool earth! — until her snout settled on her shaggy, extended forepaw, all of us rightly forgotten, snapping her eyes shut quick as a trigger and already sleeping, dreaming perhaps. Sometimes in her sleep she twitched, abruptly uncurling and curling herself again; sometimes she yipped, without opening her eyes; rarely she panted, even made a low, whinnying sound.

Moll Flanders was out of the Ardmore strain by Scotch Heather. And knew it. Perhaps we should have shown her in her heyday and let her dignity bloom, bolstered her with blue ribbons and maybe a cup or medal, and given her something to remember those last miserable days, some reminder of who she really was, when the humiliation came on her. But we had scarcely read her pedigree, her bluest of blue blood impressing us not half so much that first day as her puppy trick of rolling on her back, four shaggy paws upright, wiggling her body in a figure eight, pleading to have her silken belly rubbed; or her almost-human begging voice, as she placed her quick, trembling paws on her master's knees and covered a whole register of notes, up, down, beautifully slurring, the accents perfect, a long-drawn ecstatic

monologue that never failed to make the children, sometimes even the master, clutch her up quickly, human voices breaking into laughter at her continued, singsong soliloquy, her black eyes sparkling and clear.

Doubtless ribbons and cups, and the memory of them, would have helped her those last wretched days. As it was, when the ninth year came, we could offer her only what comforts she chose. She ate what she wanted, though always a kind of good breeding tempered her fancies. Once the bowl of food was on the floor, though she gobbled it quickly, she was not noisy or slobbering. And when the bowl was emptied, she knew she had eaten her fill. She licked her hairy chops and stood drowsily silent for a moment, drank half-heartedly from the water bowl, turned, wagged her tail, and blinked once in a kind of sleepy thank-you, and went her way—sometimes to the yard, in the days when she still scampered grotesquely over a blowing leaf, riding on her hind feet like a black, bobbing, rocking-horse, yipping melodiously, pretending to pounce on the vicious leaf though never quite dropping on it—she was kind, too, incredibly gentle—or later, returning to her bed in the

corner, twirling, scuffling, sniffing, dropping to sleep. She slept insatiably towards 'the ninth year. Later it made her wakeless nights only more grotesque. If only that sleep might have daily increased, winding tighter and tighter about her till it wound too tightly, a gentle, blissful throttling, the end of all painful waking, only sleep everlasting. . . .

II

When we entered the kennels we knew at once which puppy it was we had chosen; or rather, which chose us. As we entered, the caged dogs set up a frenzied, expectant, crazy yowl: wire-hairedes, bull terriers, Scotties, spaniels, even a Great Dane pup already the size of a small cow, awkwardly sprawling around his cage on legs that bent in every direction like rubber. But one was silent. She sat fully confident on her hindquarters and simply stared at us, never once flicking her eyes. She merely waited. We were the ones. When we approached her, she rose on all fours, yawned, let out a slightly impatient yip, glanced about her kennel as though to see whether there was anything she might have forgotten, and squatted again, still with her upturned gaze held on

us — here you are! Well! What are you waiting for?

She was brindle, not quite a year old, having just finished her season. Her tail was a little too short, but her coat staunchly rough; her body swung low. The Great Dane, seeing us linger at her kennel, roared and collapsed on his long awkward legs and flung himself from one side of his kennel to the other like a panicked baboon. But the Scottie waited, nearly insolent on her haunches. At last she rose, bending her head low, and licked her tongue through the wire of her cage, making up to us. We spoke none too enthusiastically of her brindle coat. And her tail was too short. Abruptly she withdrew from before the wire, turned swiftly with an air of not giving a hoot, and settled herself in the corner of her kennel, huddled together, her ears drooped, staring at us with slight, bobbing movements of her head, fixing us with disappointment and hurt pride, but also a sulky indifference. It was all we needed. The Great Dane bounced and sprawled for nothing.

Her name became Siri.

It was right we had chosen a quiet dog, not too frisky to bother Moll's sleep, not too stubborn to learn from her. When the car drew

up before the house, she leaped out with a soft-footed lunge and paddled up the stairs as though she had known all along which house would be hers, waiting for us, tongue dripping, by the door — already a thousand times she had gone in and out that door, it was hers. She entered, possessor of the house, and at once began a survey of it, with swift, short-legged steps all round the edge of the carpet, under the piano, with quick, hungry sniffs. And abruptly, in the kitchen, confronted Moll.

Unexpectedly our quiet puppy lurched, rose to her hind legs, set up a shrill, uncouth yipping, and danced and careened around Moll and bounced against her and snapped at her paws. And next swerved and went like lightning over the floor on swift, fumbling paws, her nose to the carpets, in a straight line to the water bowl under the sink, and immediately drained it.

Moll rose in her bed, though not too swiftly. She blinked and turned up to us questioningly. Then slowly she turned back to the puppy and relentlessly stared, but with dignity and patience, merely waiting in her broken slumber until this disturbance should be removed. But once Siri had emptied the bowl and sent

it clanking half-way across the kitchen, she turned on her swift paws and rolled against Moll and nipped at the soft black fur of her throat, tail wagging like a wind-shaken branch, paying no heed whatsoever to Moll's taut head, jerked slightly away as she drew herself back and surveyed the noisy, careening puppy with polite, but impatient-growing, curious black eyes. Whereupon Siri, not knowing rebuff, ignored her and made straightway for the living room and the best chair, curled up, and fell sound asleep.

III

It was the days that followed that began the gradual undermining of all Moll Flanders' ego, all that the years had given her, vanishing like mist against her own desperate will. At the beginning she hazarded quivering indifference, her eyes half anger, half fright; yet how could she be indifferent when daylong the puppy pursued her, choosing to lie wherever Moll lay, to sniff where Moll sniffed? Even, on walks to the corner, making friends with the lazy, sleek King? And on the second evening, at bedtime, the puppy not only again, in scurrying about the kitchen, drained and upset Moll's water

bowl—but ended with dripping, dank paws and drenched belly-fur in bed beside Moll. Moll twitched, rose upright, aloof, glowering. But Siri wound herself in a ball, buried her nose under her paw, and fell fast asleep. So was Moll Flanders to share her couch with this short-tailed, brindled pup? She waited fully five minutes, her eyes flicking outraged about the room, but the browbeaten look, too, coming into her gaze; and then herself descended from the bed—and ever after slept on the floor.

She had no weapons. Blithe Siri went her gay way, her tail incessantly wagging. But on the fourth morning, as Siri flashed open her eyes, stretched, humping up her rear, and in the stretching absorbing again all the vitality she had spent the day before, next leaping with a glad yip from her new bed toward Moll's hard bed on the floor, Moll likewise leapt—had she slept at all during the night? had she lain with her sick, outraged thoughts all through the long hours?—and with a snarl, the frenzy plain in her bulging, black eyes, bared her teeth to the shocked, suddenly cowering Siri. But before the teeth could reach flesh, a furious hand shot heavily against Moll's ribs. She halted, stunned. She stood still, quivering,

her ears pricked and her head sickly cocked, the eyes glaring and a long, low growl pouring from her tense throat. But she did not move. In shame the master's hand went to her back, with petting and a hundred mumbled apologies; even stupid Siri cowered and waddled against Moll, licking, whimpering, cuddling. But Moll knew. After a moment's taut stillness her growl ceased, and seeming a much smaller dog, she slunk to a corner, looking up with beaten, mortally offended eyes, and pressed herself backward against the wall.

Her shame was consummate. Her gaze never lost its accusing, humiliated hurt. She lay comatose on the floor and rose to her feet only when Siri drew near, when she sprang up like something electric and waited stock-still, her whole body trembling with tenseness and martyrdom, her eyes frightenedly blinking, until Siri had finished her yipping or sniping and wandered away. Siri gone, she dropped to the floor again, panting, her neck stretched forward to allow her black head to press tight against the wall—but never, these days, sleeping, her big strained eyes ceaselessly open as though she must always watch for some new terrifying assault, some graver indignity. Walking on her

leash, she hung her head, her tail drooping.

Then at the end of two weeks—how frenziedly unendurable things had become!—she began to play.

With her natural dignity she had played little, even in her puppy days. Now she was a desolate dower playing tag. The children bought an oversized rubber mouse for the puppy. Like black lightning Siri coursed through the house with the squealing mouse in her sharp puppy teeth, shaking it till it seemed her own ears must soon detach themselves, smash against the walls; dashing insanely, suddenly halting, drawing all the loose rugs in a heap, shaking again, viciously chewing, dropping it deliberately in the hope that one of the children would snatch it from her, that she in turn might pursue the child, snatch the mouse from its grip and tug, tug like a frantic goat, then leap in the air and fling the bedraggled mouse high upward, catching it again in her sharp teeth and at last resting at the children's feet, exhausted, fiercely panting, yet her eyes and mouth ecstatically laughing.

As Siri coursed through the house, Moll watched. After a week of eating nothing she had begun to eat voraciously, not only her own

food but with an insane frenzy gobbling Siri's too, food she had disdained before, crackers, bread sopped in milk. Where Siri was, she was. When Siri was called into her harness, Moll, with a hollow, barking eagerness, yapped for hers. Then at one such time when Siri dashed from room to room and shook and tossed and harassed her hideous, squeaking mouse and finally dropped it at her master's feet, waiting for him to pick it up only that she might snatch it away, hardly had the master's hand reached for the bedraggled mouse when Moll shot from her corner with a pitiful, febrile yelp, and gripped the mouse in her teeth. She yapped and chased and darted under her master's legs and grew breathless far before her time and jumped against the master's stunned arms, the mouse grotesquely clutched in her mouth, her eyes begging — *play! play!*

The nightmarish, humiliating sight lasted five minutes. She tried, like agile Siri, to toss the mouse upward, but fumbled and lost it, snarlingly retrieving it, all the while her flashing eye and perked ears too visibly showing how she waited for the children's joyous, appreciative shrieks—but none came, even the children, like the master, watched in sick, shamed si-

lence—and scurried with her old bones under tables and chairs, shaking and thrashing the mouse until she made herself dizzy. She dropped at last at her master's feet. She was so exhausted as hardly to be able to breathe, the skin over her ribs swelling and contracting fiercely; her pale tongue lopping ridiculously far from the side of her foamy mouth; her tail, as she tried to thump it, only had strength to wag feebly; and as Siri came up to her to sniff questioningly, in Moll Flanders' eyes was that frantic, desperate, monstrosly grotesque attempt at grinning as one might find in the leer of a drunken child.

IV

The dumb defeat never left her eyes. And all day, ever after, she lay pressed against the wall, her head stretched tautly back, always faintly panting as though she were chased. She no longer sprang to her feet when the playful Siri approached her, but, trembling, pressed still closer to the wall. And now the harness must be put over her bowed head with greatest difficulty; only when the leash was finally snapped on would she rise to her feet and let herself be dragged to the door. At the top of

the steps she lingered, and blinked at the outside, glancing cravenly to right and left—then waddled like something half-dead toward the corner with the puppy repeatedly pouncing against her, when she merely halted, jerked her head backward, and waited for the puppy to stop, but no more with anger or impatience; instead, limitless resignation.

And nothing, not the hopeful snapping of fingers or the children's conciliatory pats or the master's soft-spoken *Moll! . . . Moll Flanders!* . . . could make her raise her eyes as she lay daylong stretched in her corner. Her ears perked, as though she might have heard her name called; but she would not shift her eyes, ceaselessly staring ahead of her, so heavy with lassitude. A bowl of food, all the choicest things she had liked best, raw beef, even a steak bone, could not make her rise to her feet. Though at times she began quickly panting, her tongue lolling palely from her mouth, she would not drink from the bowl of fresh, cool water set quickly before her. She did not stir. Finding herself forgotten, she seemed to have forgotten us. She refused to eat anything at all; she grew thin, emaciated; her black, cowering, pitiful body abruptly

seemed to grow incredibly small.

But then on that last day, she forsook her corner. She got to her feet and began to roam from room to room, silently, though still ignoring the cries of the children, the playful yips of Siri who even rushed to her once, the gruesome mouse clutched in her puppy teeth. Moll paid no heed to the master's encouraging laugh. Hopefully, a bowl of food was prepared and set before her—she would eat again. But she halted stock-still over the bowl; her black, empty eyes stared down at the food for a full minute; and she walked away.

Why, instead of going to the closet where her leash and harness hung, did she abruptly flick her eyes with their curious, blank accusation up at the master and then swiftly make her way to the door? She let out one hollow, faint yip and scratched with her shaggy paw against the door jamb. She was let out, without her leash. Then she lingered again on the top step, looking emptily to right and left, gave one more faint yip, then started off down the street. . . .

It was boisterous Siri who found her, half-way up the block under the small clump of bushes where she had crawled, her eyes, as in life, staring blankly ahead of her, her black fur stretched mercilessly taut

over her ribs from the many days of not eating. Siri, finding the body, sniffed at it still with a glint of play in her eyes, but soon after let out a whimpery howl. Even King, from the corner, rose to his sleek but slumbrous feet and

glided to view it. Then King returned to his corner and dozed again, and Siri wheeled on her swift paws to nip playfully at his smooth ears; and neither gave any more notice to Moll Flanders' passing.



ROCKS

BY DANIEL W. SMYTHE

THE uneven rocks in the form of trunk or prow,
Forever changeless, and cold and resolute,
Stand in the pastures never heeding the plow;
In woods they unknowingly guide the twisting root.

The sea shore flaunts them: thrust from the trickling slime
They front the charge of the waves. Or motionless
On tortured coasts that buckle the whip of time,
They pattern the hollow weed and the shell's impress.

Mountains of rock have carried the heights of the world
Through the layered clouds, to be gaped at from afar. . . .
The silence, the shade under particles that have whirled
Everywhere feeling no pain nor joy nor war.

And mind will endure with its frailty this granite ledge
That shadows the path along with the fragile stem.
But the studded fields still wait, still fitting the edge
Of silence to reluctant motion that turns to them.

THE HORSE-AND-BUGGY FARMER

BY FRANK MONEY

WHILE the rest of the Republic's agrarians have been jostling round the federal trough, shrilly demanding free cash, benefits, and handouts, the Yankee farmer has stood his embattled ground, asking for little and getting less. The answer to this curious paradox of the 1930's does not lie in the field of New Deal metaphysics nor in any proverbial honesty of New England politicians, but in the person of the Yankee himself. He is, to start with, an honest, thrifty, debt-paying individual. He is also a fellow of considerable acumen in practical affairs. But above all, the Yankee is a genuine, hard-working, home-loving farmer — not a businessman who takes his checkbook with him when he goes a-plowing. Which is precisely the reason why he is not to be found standing today in the handout line with his Southern and Western brethren, blaming all his troubles on Wall Street, the Republicans, the Supreme Court, and acts of God. In a word, he has neatly nullified the

New Deal theories of subsidization by erecting and operating an independent agriculture that has been earning, without governmental assistance, the highest *per capita* income obtained in any group of farm states in the Republic.

New England received none of the benefit payments on wheat and cotton, and only a small portion of the money distributed under the AAA corn-hog reduction program. Not only did the gentle rain of checks fail to lave his rock-ribbed hills, but the Yankee farmer's income was actually reduced by the AAA processing taxes. These payments went out of his pockets instead of into them because he is not a raiser of grain, and because two of his chief sources of profit, dairy stock and poultry, are heavy grain consumers. So that the New England agrarian, without swallowing Rooseveltian panaceas or governmental largesse, has conquered the Depression by recourse to an elementary but nevertheless unassailable program: that is, the judicious application of diversified farming

(the growing of a variety of crops as opposed to a specialization in one), coupled with the practice of making the farm as far as possible the source of his family's food supply. The fact that the collectivists to date have overlooked this eminent solution to what is termed a National Emergency, fails to dismay the embattled Yankee *kulak* a whit; he would not, so to speak, swap the experiences of five generations of practical forebears for all the publicity that ever gushed from Dr. Wallace's gold-plated press bureau in Washington.

In its essentials, New England agriculture has not changed greatly since Colonial days; the changes that have occurred are superficial and are of form rather than content. Diversified farming is as old as New England itself and so is the Yankee conviction that his farm should first of all feed himself. This is in refreshing contrast to the practices of the Westerner, now being spoon-fed on federal manna, who from the beginning adopted a system of specialization in grain or livestock and depended upon its sale to support his family and carry the old homestead. Whereas the Yankee viewed his farm as a home and a source of living, the Westerner considered his a purely commercial venture, with the purse of

the American taxpayer as the guarantee of perpetual solvency.

This divergence in viewpoint, subsequently embedded in diametrically opposed systems of agriculture, is partly explained by the difference of spirit and objective in the original settlers. New England was colonized by people who came looking for homes; the West was opened by adventurers bent on the exploitation of the nation's richest agricultural region. The Yankee got his third-rate farm only after laboriously clearing the land; the Westerner got his for the taking. The Yankee grew to depend upon industry and thrift for whatever he earned; the Westerner adopted the lusty traits of the gambler looking for easy money. So it has come about that from the West always rises the loudest clamor of something for nothing from the government, a cry that the Southern cotton planter has recently taken up. The New Englander, however, has remained silent, and essayed to solve his own problems himself, for these characteristics are a heritage supporting the whole system of Yankee agriculture.

II

In Colonial days the New Englander's system of diversified farm-

ing was somewhat broader than now; under conditions that prevailed at that time, it was possible for his farm to be virtually self-sustaining. He raised cattle, sheep, horses, and hogs, both commercially and for home use; he grew most of the grains — corn, wheat, buckwheat, oats, rye, and barley; he produced an abundance of vegetables and sufficient fruit for home consumption. He continued in this fashion until the agricultural development of the West threw such an abundance of meats and grain upon the market that the prices fell sharply. Here, so far as the Yankee was concerned, was a surplus — if a surplus is understood to mean a supply in such quantity that it sells below the cost of production. Hence, his small, thin-soiled fields could not compete with the fertile plains of the West. But faced with the problem of overproduction, he did not lobby in Congress for a solution of his difficulties. When he saw that changed conditions had rendered his system of farming unprofitable, he modified it; he gave up raising beef and pork commercially, and to a considerable extent wool and mutton; he stopped raising horses and greatly curtailed grain production. And if it was during this period of readjustment that the roofs of many New Eng-

land farms fell into cellars, and brush took root in pastures, no one saw any pressing need of subsidizing the Yankee. Somehow he got on his feet again, unassisted.

He went into dairying with a vengeance. Next he gave some thought to the hen which previously had occupied a minor agricultural role. The flocks numbered only a couple dozen or thereabout, enough to supply eggs for the family and an occasional fryer. In Yankee argot they were called barnyard fowl because they picked their living from undigested grain in the manure pile when they were not chasing bugs in the fields. They were never fed grain in Summer nor were they provided with roosting places; they put up for the night in the carriage shed or in the barn. But now they were moved to special quarters, their numbers increased, and their feed regulated to insure egg production throughout the year. And to dairying and poultry raising, the Yankee farmer added the commercial growing of fruits and vegetables, especially potatoes. Again he was on his way, still following diversification but in new channels.

Today, as a result, he harvests approximately 3,000,000 acres and grosses an income from crops and livestock products of approxi-

mately \$200,000,000, a business that furnishes employment and homes for a farm population of more than 600,000. (This is the conservative but workable system of operation that for years has been the butt of condescension from the rugged Southern and Western agrarians.) The average Yankee farmer lives on a farm of approximately one hundred acres, of which half is in woodland, a considerable part of the remainder being pasturage and hayland. Not over five or ten acres are tilled annually and the first figure is more likely to be the case. Quite probably the owner was born on this selfsame farm and inherited it from his father; or at least was born within ten miles of the place. He expects to spend the rest of his life there, and plans constructively for gradual and steady improvement. To him, the farm is home and farming is his lifetime profession. He does his work himself, aided by a couple of sons from ten to twenty years old, or if the sons are lacking he may have a hired man. He keeps a comparatively small herd of dairy cows, a flock of one to three hundred hens, and quite commonly he grows fruit or vegetables for his nearest market. Invariably he raises as much of his own food as he can — potatoes, a large garden of vegetables, fruits,

and berries. These are eaten in season and preserved for Winter use. In addition, the farm supplies an abundance of milk, eggs, poultry, pork, and quite frequently home-grown beef.

There are, of course, one-crop farmers in New England — specialists in potatoes, fruit, market gardening, tobacco, dairying, and poultry — but there has been a marked tendency in recent years to add some other crop to the specialty. Year in and year out, the diversified farmer is in sound financial position. His income is derived not from one crop but from several; even in a year in which weather or price makes most of the crops unprofitable, at least one is reasonably certain to show favorable returns and keep his home intact.

Some aspects of New England diversified farming are highly significant when compared to practices of the one-crop farmer in the South and West. The small size of the average New England farm — just half the average for the United States as a whole — carries the advantage of owner-labor, personal oversight, and personal interest. Over eighty per cent of New England farms are owner-operated; only forty per cent are so classified in the West North Central grain

states, and in the West South Central cotton area the percentage is thirty. The value of the New Englander's garden vegetables for home use only (not including potatoes) is approximately \$50; that of the grain and cotton states, \$30.

Unlike the Western farmer, the New Englander did not expand his holdings in boom times in the speculative hope of doubling and trebling his income. He improved the farm he already owned, added to its strength as an investment, and saved the rest of his money. If he had not had a sound investment and some money in the bank, he would be in the same financial condition today as the Western farmer who overexpanded on land bought at \$200 to \$400 an acre when livestock and grain were selling at an all-time high. As it is, the Yankee has managed to survive a period of crumbling American agriculture and live through an even more disastrous period of partisan legislative experiments that have forced him to subsidize the Western farmer and pay for his errors of judgment.

III

At this point, one may ask if the principles of Yankee farming which have proved successful for

upwards of three hundred years can be applied with equal success elsewhere. His thrifty attitude toward money, his resistance to temptations of speculation, are unquestionably sound. His system of diversification of crops, which among other advantages permits the spreading of labor over the year (something industry advocates for itself), has been found practicable where it has been tried. But the specialist who relies upon a single crop is courting disaster from two directions. Unfavorable weather or a combination of factors that farmers merge under the heading of a poor crop year may so reduce the yield of a field crop as to make the year's work a cause of bankruptcy. On the other hand, a year so favorable to the growth of a particular crop that a surplus arises is followed by a fall in price below the cost of production.

Diversified farming aims to escape this pitfall. A year that is favorable for the growth of one crop, producing a surplus, may be unfavorable or normal in regard to another. For example, a late Spring frost that kills most vegetable crops and retards corn has no ill effect upon wheat, oats, or rye. An August and September drought that cuts the yield of corn does not interfere with Winter

wheat and oats, both of which will be harvested before dry weather commonly sets in. Excessive rainfall in August and September, combined with scalding sun, rots potatoes but is quite favorable to corn.

In making the farm the principal source of his food supply, the Yankee farmer provides himself with a sound and generous menu. It may not be highly varied, but taken along with plenty of fresh air and exercise it has made the Yankee a hardy, tough-fibered fellow. Adoption of a program that would furnish the 32,000,000 farm population with an abundance of such staple foods could be accomplished without subsidy, and would relieve more want than has any single New Deal measure.

Of course, differences in soil and climate may prevent the raising of all these foods in some sections, but each farmer could produce as much of his own food as the particular locality permits. Southern and Western farmers have been notoriously averse to doing this. As specialists, they protest that such a program would interfere with the raising of their particular cash crop. The answer to their objection is also a partial answer to the question of surplus. While a Yankee farmer is busy growing his own

food, he is not raising wheat or cotton or feeding hogs, something from which each Southern and Western farmer might well take a little time off each day. If he spent his time fitting out the family larder, he would at least be sure of something to eat.

The crux of America's agrarian problem might be worded this way: if you put a man on a piece of ground and tell him to get a living or die, he will live. But if the same man is told to run a farm as a successful business, a vastly different situation arises. He is confronted by complexities of management not directly concerned with tillage of the soil; he meets such problems as marketing, such unpredictable commercial factors as price, and he must face the competition of other men engaged in his business; he must not only have farming ability, he must know something of the principles of business and must expose himself to the gambles involved.

Predictions are a waste of time, but at least one fact deserves speculative consideration: when agriculture finally rights itself from its present state of prostration, it is more likely to do so through the adoption of principles that practice has proved sound than by chimerical formulae of learned but

inexperienced theorists. There is no reason to believe that American agriculture has reached its final phase, either in form or practice. On the contrary, its present disintegration strongly suggests change if agriculture is to free itself from patronage and become a self-sustaining business again. Among the possible changes is the adoption of some of the principles that Yankee farmers have employed successfully for centuries.

Yet even the Yankee, who so far has kept his head above water, may be on the road to agricultural extinction by the unpredictable glad-hand of government. Already movements are afoot that hold no good for him. He hears reports of the development of the Columbia River dam that will hold back a vast lake for the irrigation of millions of acres now desert; he recalls having read of \$100,000,000 that is being expended to canal the Colorado River for the irrigation of

regions in the Imperial Valley; he reads of plans for the spending of millions of dollars on a soil conservation program for the further strengthening of the position of his sometimes rugged Southern and Western colleagues.

How much longer, he asks himself, will his products be able to compete against those of other agricultural regions operating under the advantage of billions in federal subsidy? When he can no longer compete, will he be told that his small, shallow-soiled farms are economically unsound and that his methods are those of the horse-and-buggy days? Will he live to see thrift and industry and initiative eliminated by legislative panaceas conceived in the overworked brains of experimentalists? If such a day comes, he can withdraw with at least the satisfaction of knowing that he leaves only because self-reliance has finally been driven from the field.



PONZI'S GOLDEN BUBBLE

By ROBERT STRUNSKY

NO COUNTRY can be said to have a monopoly on master swindlers, and this country least of all; but it is still surprising that there have been so few of them. The Republic is the sort of country in which they should flourish in far greater numbers, yet they crop out only at long intervals, and at times when there seems to be no obvious reason for them. They belong neither to booms nor depressions, to crime waves nor to eras of virtue. Unlike the worms, they do not come out with the rain. On the contrary, they are sudden, sporadic, unpredictable, and costly. And like the common cold, their genesis is unknown and their germ ineradicable.

Actually they are part and parcel of a nation which for five centuries has been internationally advertised as the Land of Opportunity. The power which drove the good ships *Nina*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria* was far more the profit motive than the wind. And whether you like it or not, such men as Charles Ponzi are a product of the profit motive.

They are still coming here for the same reason they have always come: for material and spiritual enrichment—in the order named.

You remember Ponzi. It is only seventeen years since he was on the front page, the fabulous Boston financier raking in \$250,000 a day in ways that were dark and with tricks that were vain. Only a few years before he had been a dishwasher in a restaurant, a grocer's helper, a hod carrier. But throughout his early years in America his spirit was restless, charged with ambition and marked by energy and native cunning. These traits he inherited in part from his parents, who presented him with \$200 and a steamship ticket to America. It is significant that he landed in New York in 1899 with \$2.50 in his pocket: he had lost the difference in a card game on the boat. He was seventeen years old, a thin-faced, bright-eyed Italian boy, yet in spite of his slight physique, he started pushing wheelbarrows for a New York builder. Soon afterwards, however, he turned up in a

Pittsburgh grocery store, delivering foodstuffs. He then changed jobs again and washed dishes in a restaurant. He traveled extensively, far more than most of his compatriots who mainly dug their ditches and stayed in them. And probably he rode the rods.

One salient fact stands out in this early period. Ponzi had somehow managed to become a bank clerk in the Zarossi bank in Montreal, and in this connection he started signing other persons' names to checks. It did not take the police long to catch up with the now dapper Italian. They put him away in the penitentiary for three years, from 1908 to 1911, and thus we have an incontestable record of at least three years of his life. But what happened during the following six years is shrouded in darkness.

Ponzi does not bob up again until the Winter of 1917. In January of that year he got a job at \$16 a week with the Boston brokerage firm of J. R. Poole and Company, an old and reputable organization. A year elapsed, during which he managed to avoid the World War draft and marry, in February, 1918, a young woman of Boston named Rose Grecco. During this period his brain was in ferment. The operations of finance hypnotized

him, and at this point, you might say, he sloughed his Italian identity as a snake his skin and became inspired with the American Idea. This idea, quite simply, was that he was as good as the next man, and therefore there was no reason why he couldn't be as rich as the next man. Promptly he set himself to this task.

By the Summer of 1919, Ponzi had been entrusted with the handling of routine office correspondence. He opened large quantities of mail and one day he slit the fatal envelope. It was an ordinary missive from one of the firm's Spanish clients, but enclosed in the letter was an international postal reply coupon. It had no meaning for Ponzi at the time, but he made inquiries. Soon he discovered that such a coupon corresponded roughly to a draft for return postage; *i.e.*, you turned in the coupon at the post office and received either stamps or currency.

For the first time, Ponzi was introduced to the complications of foreign exchange. He learned that while these coupons could be redeemed for five cents' worth of American stamps, or simply for five cents, they cost only one cent in Spain. And suddenly he knew he Had Something. What would prevent him from purchasing a

large quantity of coupons in Spain and redeeming them in the United States, making four cents on every coupon? He could see no obstacle. He had saved \$1000. He invested it in postal coupons. And, presto! the plan worked.

II

Ponzi resigned from Poole & Company, rented a one-room office at 27 School Street, and called it the Securities Exchange Company — SEC. (It was only a coincidence that some years later the United States Government established the Securities Exchange Commission, an organization directed toward a slightly different end.) Ponzi, designating himself as an investment firm, advertised that he would guarantee fifty per cent interest on an investment within three weeks. It had a fantastic sound, but a warming one. He opened for business on December 20, 1919, and on the first day took in \$250. Three weeks later he returned to his clients \$375. His gross profit on the Spanish coupons was 400 per cent. His net profit was 350 per cent.

It seems odd that an unknown Italian immigrant operating with small sums in a remote corner of Boston should affect the processes of government. The Post Office

Department, however, began to note a steady drain on the postal coupon exchange. There were stirrings of activity. A law was passed prohibiting a single individual from redeeming more than ten coupons a day. You would have thought this would have spoiled Ponzi's game. On the contrary, his daily receipts doubled. Customers overwhelmed him with funds, and his name went by word of mouth through Boston and surrounding New England.

In the Spring of 1920, he was taking in \$250,000 a day. He had established branch offices in Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine, and Rhode Island. His chief assistant was a butcher's helper named John A. Dondero, who was making \$1000 a day for himself. The postal authorities decided it was time for an investigation. Their preliminary research revealed that a maximum of only \$8 a day was being redeemed throughout the country in postal coupons.

The discovery beggared the imagination. Was the man a counterfeiter? Yet search as they might, the G-men couldn't pin a thing on him. Ponzi himself, writing of that era, reported that "on the last day of business, July 26, I took in \$3,000,000".

He bought a mansion in the

fashionable suburb of Lexington. He spent \$40,000 on furnishings. He purchased a bright blue custom-built limousine for \$12,000. He stocked a wine cellar. Here his heredity betrayed him. When the agents unearthed it they found it filled exclusively with 100 gallons of the brand known in the vernacular as "dago red". He gave his wife \$1000 a month to run the house. Two years before she had been making ends meet on \$16 a week.

And how was he earning his money? The postal authorities were slowly seeing light. Ponzi had long ago stopped exchanging postal coupons in this country. He had advanced far beyond such elementary technique, and now was doing business through foreign agents.

Those were evil days for the currency of Central Europe. The normal par value of the Austrian krone was 20 cents. The market price in Vienna at the time was 0.7 cents. Ponzi deposited \$2000 in a Vienna bank and purchased a draft for 140,000 kronen. He bought Austrian international postal coupons at the rate of four per krone, thus accumulating a collection of 560,000 coupons. He redeemed these coupons in Switzerland for 140,000 Swiss francs and

converted the francs into dollars in New York at the rate of 5½ per dollar. It yielded him a total of \$25,000. This was his net on an original investment of \$2000.

It seemed to work excellently, but the machinery was slow, intricate, and cumbersome. Meanwhile, investors' money was flowing into the little Boston office like Spring freshets. It was the Summer of 1920 and the fabricator of this scheme was a thirty-eight-year-old, olive-skinned immigrant who had still to take out his first papers. Ponzi, overwhelmed by success, and impatient at the delays in negotiating foreign exchange, lost his head.

A picture of his mind may be gleaned from his comment regarding C. W. Barron, editor of one of the leading financial periodicals, *Barron's Weekly*. Ponzi remarked: "I've forgotten more about international finance than Barron ever knew." He began overreaching himself. He quit the international field and resorted to a simpler plan.

This plan, in essence, was to use the deposits of his new clients to pay off the interest rates of his old ones. It was the oldest double-play in the world—from Peter to Ponzi to Paul—and, as often happens under such circumstances, it

was Ponzi who was left holding the bag in the ultimate sense. His clientele numbered 40,000 souls. They had turned in a total of \$20,000,000.

Between December 20, 1919, and July 26, 1920, Ponzi had issued nearly \$500,000 in promissory notes. In the meantime he had purchased the controlling stock of the Hanover Trust Company and made it his personal bank. He bought out the Poole brokerage firm, where he had worked ten months before for \$16 a week. It sounded like the dizziest fantasy imaginable, but it all came true.

Meanwhile, of course, he was getting in deeper each day. How he planned to meet the day of reckoning, only he can say. The point is that the federal authorities caught up with him. They closed his business on July 27. They placed him under arrest on August 13. They raided his home and confiscated his property, the 100 gallons of red wine, the bright blue limousine, the costly hangings, the gaudy accessories. They called it the most stupendous fraud in the history of the Post Office Department.

"Our city," commented the Boston *Herald* a little belatedly, "has long been the paradise of wildcat mining enterprises."

III

Ponzi was indicted eighteen ways from Christmas. The State filed its bills of particulars. Calvin Coolidge was governor. He declined, as usual, to comment. The doors of 27 School Street, now padlocked, were besieged by unpaid clients. A police cordon was thrown around the premises. The hot Calabrian blood was coming to a boil. Ponzi cried frame-up. He was assured of his day in court.

The government made short shrift of him, convicting him the following September for mail fraud on innumerable counts, and he was sentenced to five years. Ponzi immediately appealed. He was stalling for time. He stayed out of jail the Winter of 1920-21. In the Spring, the State had concluded its preparations for his trial—or thought it had—and Ponzi was again brought before the bar, this time on charges of grand larceny. The trial began on May 27, 1921, and for no apparent reason went to pieces immediately. Lawyers wrangled, filed motions, obtained writs, and let loose obstructionist tactics. The trial was delayed until the following November. Ponzi, acting as his own attorney, obtained his acquittal on December 2.

In the meantime his appeal from the federal conviction fell down and he was carted off to jail in earnest. While in prison he got ulcers of the stomach, wrote some lyrics to the tune of *Casey Jones*, and was appointed prison librarian, the reward of all convicts having an IQ over 12. His dog days had begun. Two years elapsed before he made a move toward freedom. In December, 1923, he appealed to Coolidge for a pardon. But Coolidge still wasn't talking. On August 6, 1924, after serving three and a half years of the five-year sentence, he was released for good behavior.

The State pounced on him the minute he got out. It had prepared another series of indictments and he was brought to trial for the third time on November 4, 1925. A week later the jury disagreed. Three more months went by and in February, the third trial was instituted. This time they got him, and gave him seven to nine years as a common thief. But again he appealed and again was released on \$10,000 bail.

It was obviously borrowed money which he furnished, the contributions of friends whom he had enriched a few years before. His one desire was to recoup, and with that in mind he entrained for

Florida. This was 1925. He had caught a fleeting glimpse of the shape of things to come down in alligator-land. But the police were wise to him and in Jacksonville he was kept under surveillance. A group of prominent citizens led by the Mayor started an abortive movement to throw him out. But it didn't work. Ponzi went into the real estate business, and in a few weeks was trying to sell ten-dollar-an-acre land for \$230. He took the alias of Charles Borelli, not that he thought he was fooling the police, but it sounded better to the customers. When the citizens found him out, they became flushed with indignation. Ponzi bargained with them. He would give it all up, he offered, for a \$50-a-week job. But he could find no takers.

He began working with securities and once more was thwarted. The G-men were on his trail and indicted him for mail fraud. He was tried and acquitted. The State of Florida charged him with violation of the Blue Sky laws. He was convicted and sentenced to a year. He left the State hurriedly, before they could seize him, and became a fugitive from justice. Meanwhile, his appeal from the Massachusetts conviction had collapsed and now two States were after him. He drove surreptitiously

through New England, visiting the local spas in Winter when they were deserted. But his troubles were beginning to crowd him, and one day he walked into the District Attorney's office and surrendered. It suddenly seemed the easiest way. They marched him into Charlestown State Prison to begin the seven-year sentence on February 15, 1927.

Ponzi was in prison during the mad years from 1927 to 1929. Those days were made for him, and it must have been a bitter pill to have to spend them in jail. He remained there, however, through the worst of the Depression. On February 14, 1934, after serving the full seven years save for one day, he walked out the prison gates with pallor still visible but heavier by forty pounds. He was greeted by his wife who had been a faithful companion throughout the years. They arrived at South Station in Boston where the police pushed back a crowd of churning creditors. They had a chicken dinner, took in a movie, bought a new suit, and went to bed.

The next morning Ponzi pushed open the door of his hotel room to confront the dead pans of two United States marshals armed with a deportation warrant. The charge was moral turpitude. This

was the last straw — the little Italian's nerves disintegrated. He broke into a fit of weeping. Upon collecting himself, he became filled with resentment. Moral turpitude meant only one thing to him — an offense against chastity. As heaven was his witness, he swore, he had been chaste. He was arraigned before a federal commissioner who explained the nature of the charges. He was not a citizen and had committed many crimes. The government was tired of fooling with him. They were going to send him back where he came from. Although he was reported to have hidden \$1,000,000, he was unable to provide the bail bond of \$1000. Once again a friend came to his rescue. He appealed the conviction and pending his appeal, started selling wholesale groceries in Boston.

But the old fight was gone. On October 8, 1934, having lost his third appeal, Ponzi sailed involuntarily for his native land. Interviewed by newspapermen in his steerage quarters, he took full blame for everything. His wife wished to accompany him in exile, but he refused to take her. Ten days later the *Vulcania* steamed into the harbor of Naples. Disembarking, he issued a pompous statement. "The destiny of the

United States is either Communism or Fascism." As a matter of fact, nobody had asked him.

Arriving in Rome, he rented a small room and devoted himself to Literature. He started writing his autobiography, but the muse was unwilling. He got no further than a few pages. He could not find a title that satisfied him. He tried *Mr. Ponzi*, then *The Fall of Charles Ponzi*, and finally, *Boston Merry-Go-Round*. But the ink went sour and he threw away the pen.

Last June, his wife sued for divorce. She was Tired of It All. "I stuck with him through thick and thin. Now I'm through," she announced.

The divorce proceedings offered Ponzi an occasion to try to re-enter America. When it failed, he became embittered. He issued a theatrical statement for publication. He was then employed as a salesman for a building materials concern.

My whole attitude has changed. I frequently get drunk. I will quit my job as salesman. I will not live on borrowed money. I am planning to make a surprise visit to the United States.

Ponzi carried out part of his threat. On September 5, 1936, he got drunk and was run over by a Roman delivery truck. He was

only slightly injured. On September 30, he announced his intention of marrying an eighteen-year-old high-school girl as soon as his divorce was final. On October 2, he reversed his field and started contesting the divorce. And on December 10, 1936, a brief item in the American newspapers recited that the Supreme Court of the State of Massachusetts had granted the divorce petition.

The world at that time was preoccupied with a divorce of far vaster dimensions, one that was rocking the structure of an Empire. Clearly the case of Ponzi *v.* Ponzi was not in the same league with Simpson *v.* Simpson. But there were at least 50,000 people on the North American continent whose emotional structure must have been rocked by this brief item. For them, the clipped Italian name recalled events of tragic memory.

The Ponzi saga proves but one thing. Since the dapper little Italian scuttled the public, no single figure of equal dimensions or with equivalent cunning has appeared on this side of the Atlantic. The same generation gave Hatry to England and Stavisky to France. But Ponzi was the last of his kind to cultivate the American garden.

AUTOPSY ON CHICAGO

By J. H. OPPENHEIM

EVER since it carted away the debris of the second World's Fair, and dumped on Marshall Field's bargain tables several tons of left-over guidebooks, Chicago has been troubled by symptoms of that strange literary pestilence first visited upon it in the wake of the great Columbian Fair of '93. For once again the Cradle of Rotary is besieged by young novelists and poets. And the city elders shudder, recalling how miserably the spirit of the Windy City drooped under the toxic influence of *Sister Carrie*, *The Common Lot*, *The Pit*, and *The Cliff Dwellers*, and how sadly it languished after the turn of the century — oppressed by the Doolleyisms of the 1900's, the poetic rash of the 1910's, the Hechtian cachexy of the 1920's, and that unkindest cut of all, H. L. Mencken's designation of the city as literary capital of America.

Will the Columbian plague — and its dreadful aftermath — recur? Did the high excitement of A Century of Progress infect contemporary Chicago's mute, inglorious

Dreisers? Is the disease spreading to the Midway, where a fledgling Robert Herrick teaches English composition and writes a sequel to *The Common Lot*? Has the virus been communicated to some modern Frank Norris, watching from the gallery of the shiny new Pit? Does the contagion grip a scion of Old World culture, who paces the Loop with the delicate tread of a Henry B. Fuller, and rubs elbows with the sons of *The Cliff Dwellers*? Will the *Chap Book* be feverishly revived — and the *Little Review*? And are the newsstands about to be stricken by a more impious *Literary Times*, saluting The City With The Big Shoulders as "Chicago, the jazz baby — the cinder-ridden, joyous Baptist stronghold; Chicago, the chewing-gum center of the world, the bleating, slant-headed rendezvous of half-witted newspapers, sociopaths, and pants-makers"?

There are, as has been hinted, some suspicious signs. The midland shrine of "I Will" had hardly settled down to its second century

of progress when James T. Farrell (born four years after *Sister Carrie*) completed a comfortless trilogy of the South Side, the history of a certain Studs Lonigan, beside whom the figure of Dreiser's Hurstwood is one of light romance. Another *Young Writer Remembering Chicago*, Albert Halper (whose memory does not go back to the year of *The Pit*), portrayed in *The Foundry* and *On the Shore* a raw and slangy city which revealed Frank Norris's Chicago as a pallid tintype. Louis Zara hymned the same raw city and recited the uncommon lot of one Jake Krakauer — *Blessed Is the Man* — in such lusty syllables as to torture the sensitive ear of a Robert Herrick. In serener vein, Donald Culross Peattie created, out of the stockyards atmosphere, *An Almanac for Moderns* and *Green Laurels*, and Louis Redfield Peattie, an *American Acres*. Lionel Wiggam, poet, produced a *Landscape with Figures*; Boris Todrin sang of *Hallway Lovers* and *The Room by the River*. More militantly, the Midwest Writers Conference met in a Clark Street office to lay plans for a new monthly, *Midwest — A Review*; "the time has come" — the conference heard — "to publish Midwestern magazines for Midwestern readers; and

when the precedent for Midwestern publications is established, it will then be possible for Midwestern writers to earn a living without escaping to New York". As these — and other — portents appeared, the Wednesday Book Page of the *Daily News* announced:

Ladies and gentlemen! There's a new Midwestern school of literature. Don't think there isn't!

Clearly, a disquieting parallel exists between all this activity and that of the Columbian era, when the city

Gigantic, wilful, young . . .
With restless violent hands and casual tongue

"became vocal in a new way". Yet, while there is obvious cause for alarm, the prognosis might be worse. Gloomy as conditions appear, it is practically certain that Chicago will pull through unscathed. For the Windy City has built up, out of a natural antipathy to the literary life, a formidable resistance which may be counted upon to triumph in the present crisis, and, in the long run, to bring the local literary bacilli definitely under control.

II

Skeptical Chicagoans may well begin by examining a chronic of-

fender since the early 'Nineties, the *Daily News*. For decades the *News* housed a whole school of embryo scribblers, yet as a literary force it is today patently extinct. A long record, which may be traced as far back as Eugene Field's *Sharps and Flats*, has been brought to a close. It was with Field's column that the city's literary discomfort originated. The Chicago Dante — as he called himself — “bard of pork and lard” and author of *Little Boy Blue* — shuffled in carpet slippers through the rickety passageways of the old *News* building on Wells Street, composing paragraphs and verse that provoked a nineteen-year-old furniture installment collector named Theodore Dreiser to “write about life”. Field, it is true, gave no encouragement to the adolescent Hoosier; he did, however, protect tenderly the literary bug that lurked in the crevices of the Wells Street structure — with the result that the germ lived, for some forty years after Field's death, on the blood of young reporters. In the long succession of victims were George Ade, Finley Peter Dunne, Will Payne, Ray Stannard Baker, Slason Thompson, John V. A. Weaver, Henry Blackman Sell, Vincent Starrett, Carl Sandburg, Ben Hecht, Keith Preston, and numerous others,

most of whom were openly and notoriously publicized in Harry Hansen's *Midwest Portraits*.

By the time Mr. Hansen had escaped to Manhattan, the *News* school was well on its way to disintegration; yet it still had to be carefully watched. But with the passing in 1936 of Henry Justin Smith, managing editor, chief word-nurse to thesaurus-stricken cubs, and author, with Lloyd Lewis, of *Chicago: The History of Its Reputation*, the long literary influence of the *News* came definitely to an end. Smith, being incurably sentimental about the profession of letters, had done real damage to several generations of young newspapermen — as much by his platform appearances as by his *Deadlines* and *Josslyn*, stories of Chicago's Newspaper Row. Lecturing in his timid voice to aspiring journalists, the creator of *Deadlines* had been wont to picture the fourth floor of the old *News* building as a fascinating place:

At one desk a poetic genius taps out reviews of moving pictures; at another a novelist rich in imagination writes sketches of common things and people; at another a professor of Latin and Greek devises witty comment on books and events; at another an expert in Luxembourg folk-lore writes light verse about the folk-lore of Chicago and suburbs. . . .

—and so on, until every youngster in the class yearned for the day when he, too, would sit at a desk in this local hall of genius.

Smith's demise was seized upon by the *News* as an opportunity to change its ways. Several members of the old school, still on the payroll, were now set to constructive tasks. Lloyd Lewis, sometime dramatic critic, playwright, and author (in addition to his collaborations with Smith) of *Myths After Lincoln* and *Sherman, Fighting Prophet*, was made editor of the sports page; although even here, regrettably enough, his literary touch brought on an epidemic of contributions in verse from formerly robust Cubs fans, who queried him in mournful numbers:

Say, have you heard of Kennedy?
He pitched a no-hit game —
And Lyons, too, not long ago,
Did do the very same.

Howard Vincent O'Brien, who used to edit the Wednesday Book Page, proved his emancipation from the Smith influence by writing a covered-wagon Baedeker entitled, *Folding Bedouins, or Adrift in a Trailer*. This work immediately raised O'Brien to the status of a leading citizen. And although the Wednesday Book Page itself still appears with dismaying regularity under the editorship of

Sterling North, it has now developed a vigorous, sporting, he-man tone—which, as these excerpts from recent reviews show, is a powerful antidote to any noxious literary content:

This lad Louis Zara has a way of picking epic themes and coming through with major novels.

Take it from a writer tapping the same keg — this is the real McCoy.

If ever a book could be said to be a "natural" it is this hilarious but factual account of Oscar Wilde's tour of America. . . . Maybe this young fellow had something on the ball.

This lad can write! And does he know the Wisconsin small town! Take it from a small-town Wisconsinite, he does!

No less encouraging than these reforms at the *News* has been the decline of the notorious Schlogl café school of literature, which drew most of its patronage from old-timers on the *News* staff. Presided over by Richard, the literary waiter, Schlogl's long held itself out as Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese of the Middle West. It specialized in a thick literary atmosphere which, for a steep consideration, it purveyed to the budding Hechts, Bodenheims, Andersons, and Sandburgs, as well as to all visiting men of letters, from Upton Sinclair to Ford Madox Ford. To the author of *Midwest Portraits*, Schlogl's was a "hallowed spot":

One sought it, mistakenly, under another name, just off the Strand in London, and thought it worth the journey; jaded souls, tired of insensate dining in Manhattan, imagined it near the Place du Tertre high up on the Butte; *feinschmecker* extolled its cuisine and dreamed for it a site near Kurfürsterdam in Berlin; the Rathusplaads had it, too, they said, in Copenhagen. I had explored them all and traveled up and down their *carte du jour*; I had indulged in delights gustatory and olfactory, and bewailing the fact that America had no cuisine worth the name, I had come back reluctantly only to find Schlogl's within three hundred yards of the desk where I performed my daily task.

The *News'* removal in 1929 to its new home across the river purged Schlogl's of a host of incipient literati; and conditions were further improved last year when the tavern changed hands. Notwithstanding that Richard, the literary waiter, and his presentation copy of *Midwest Portraits* — scribbled over by a hundred autographs — have not yet been banished, Schlogl's, under the new management, induces a minimum of literary yearnings.

An equally troublesome focus of infection was rooted out when the *News* killed off the old *Evening Post* and its *Friday Literary Review*. This event took place in 1932 while the *Post* was still clinging jealously to the tradition of intel-

lectual brilliance inaugurated in 1902 by Henry B. Fuller. The tradition had been carried forward by a young Irish immigrant named Francis Hackett, who had been lured in 1908 from an honest career behind the necktie counter in Marshall Field's basement. Hackett converted the book page into a separate supplement which developed a dangerously large circulation of its own throughout the middle border; indeed, it even circulated in England, being esteemed by personages like Arnold Bennett, who wrote in 1910: "The two American reviews of *Clayhanger* to which I look forward with most interest are the Boston *Evening Transcript* and Chicago *Evening Post*." The *Friday Review* continued to grow under the successive editorships of Floyd Dell, Lucian Cary, and Llewelyn Jones, until, in the late 'Twenties, the literary fever abated, and it dwindled to a single page again. Following the merger with the *News*, the *Review* was promptly exterminated, to the great relief of the citizenry.

Moreover, some months before the *Post's* disappearance from the newsstands, Chicago ceased to be troubled by the little old gentleman with the brown beard, who had established that journal's highbrow reputation, and whose presence in

the city stirred up an intermittent literary infectiousness. Even in the last year of his life, Henry B. Fuller had written another Chicago novel, *Not on the Screen*, as irritating in its way as *The Cliff Dwellers* of 1893. The example set by Fuller's long career, and his fourteen published volumes, was anything but wholesome; fortunately, no one has come on the scene to fill his place.

III

Of course, certain disconcerting factors remain. *Poetry* still issues regularly from East Erie Street, under the aegis of the maiden lady¹ who founded it nearly a quarter of a century ago; *Ringmaster*, at this writing, continues to pursue in LaSalle Street its ideal for an "Urbane, satirical magazine, to mirror life deeply though humorously"; *Inland Topics*, "the preferred magazine of intelligent Chicagoans", entices readers at a dollar a year; book publication of local authors is undertaken commercially by Willett, Clark & Company, and *de luxe* by Norman W. Forgue at his Black Cat Press; first edition addicts are exposed monthly to the Mark Twain corner

in William Targ's dime *Book Collectors' Journal*; the *Saturday News of New Books* in the *Tribune* regularly endorses all the best-sellers; the utilitarian *Journal of Commerce* betrays a decadent note with Kenneth Horan's literary column; tea is publicly poured at the Chicago Athletic Club, the second Wednesday of each month, by the Friends of American Authors; the Chicago Foundation for Literature and the Society of Midland Authors are as active as ever in promoting regional *belles lettres*; and *Esquire*, "the monthly magazine that really lasts a month", grows constantly larger.

The persistence of *Poetry* is admittedly disheartening. Since those first September days in 1912

... when the Muses visited
The Onion River. . . .

the female laureate of the '93 Fair has been able to provide sufficient legal tender to meet the monthly printing bills. And although Miss Monroe¹ still seeks an audience for *Poetry* as large as the twenty-five acres of people who crushed into the Manufacturers' Building on October 21, 1892, to hear her *Columbian Ode*, nevertheless *Poetry* has paid its poets as regularly as its printers; what is worse, it has even provided meals for hungry con-

¹ Miss Harriet Monroe died after this was written; *Poetry* carries on.

tributors who sought out the new office in Erie Street, or the old one in Cass,

Where Irish, English poets, wondering,
Traveled to see what voice had come

To a land, a river which were dumb
Until this spiritual Spring;

Where learned lawyers, and tired amateurs,
With unknown books out of Chicago's thick

Cold air which snuffed their wick,
Sat in, to watch what freedom lures.

Other than *Poetry*, however, none of the periodicals or societies mentioned is guilty of having conspicuously aided or abetted any native scribbler of genuine artistic pretensions. And it is doubtful whether the combined stimulus of the whole group, from *Poetry* to *Esquire*, is enough to bring on more than an occasional literary headache.

All this is not to minimize the seriousness of the current relapse; it is merely to point out that the situation is far from hopeless. Frequently since the gloomy 'Nineties, false prophets have arisen to make pronouncements as to Chicago's literary future. When Hamlin Garland, for example, came to live in the prairie metropolis, the excitement of the Columbian Exposition had not yet worn off. Believing that the city was to become "the

second great literary center of America", the author of *Rose of Dutcher's Coolly* rented a room in Elm Street and there resolved to throw himself "into the task of hurrying it forward on the road to a new and more resplendent achievement". But by 1912, his "youthful faith in Chicago's future as a great literary center had faded into middle-aged doubt. . . . One by one its writers were slipping away to Manhattan".

Again, in 1913, a visiting English novelist declared:

In a little while Chicago will be a world center of literature, music, and art. British writers will be more anxious for her verdict than that of London.

Obviously, this statement was prompted by a momentary appearance of great activity: the *Little Review*, as well as *Poetry*, was attracting notice; and the National Institute of Arts and Letters was holding its annual meeting in Chicago for the first time, having come on "a missionary expedition to darkest Illinois". It was then, too, according to Albert Parry, that out on Fifty-seventh Street, in the notorious Currey studio, "Floyd Dell tried to wed Socialism to *belles lettres*, Arthur Davison Ficke and Witter Bynner attempted to solve the purports of imagism, Edgar

Lee Masters and Sherwood Anderson read their unpublished gems, Vachel Lindsay boomed his poetry, and Eunice Tietjens whirled in her Oriental dances, while candles flickered, and moonlight looked into the windows". Before long, however, the *Little Review* emigrated to New York, the National Institute returned to civilization, and the strident Fifty-seventh Street colony was dispersed.

It was not until 1920 that a new alarm was raised, this time by H. L. Mencken:

In Chicago [ran his diagnosis] there is a mysterious something that makes for individuality, personality, charm; in Chicago a spirit broods upon the face of the waters. Find a writer who is indubitably American in every pulse-beat, an American who has something new and peculiarly American to say and who says it in an unmistakably American way, and nine times out of ten you will find that he has some sort of connection with the gargantuan abattoir by Lake Michigan — that he was bred there or got his start there, or passed through there in the days when he was young and tender.

Dr. Mencken's observations were reported while Pascal Covici was plotting to establish a publishing house in a Washington Street cellar, whence were to issue the complete works of the *News-Schlogl* school of literati, from John Drury to Ben Hecht. At the same mo-

ment, the author of *1001 Afternoons in Chicago* was hoarding adjectives for the then gestating *Chicago Literary Times*, which was soon to bid the city by the Onion River to remember that "Art is the watchword and Beauty the bride of the soul". The *Literary Times* was born — and "dedicated to the Sacred Ballyhoo" — but it brooded only a twelve-month upon the face of Lake Michigan before sinking into oblivion.

It is true that, in one or two instances, literary artists have attached themselves to Chicago for desperately long periods — but only to warn others against their folly. Edgar Lee Masters came to the city in his youth; in 1933 he testified that "the record of the experience of literary men who tried to live in Chicago shows that they were inexpressibly lonely there, and could not extract from its atmosphere enough oxygen upon which to live". And despite the appearance of so many young novelists and poets since 1933, there is no reason to fear that the percentage of literary oxygen has even slightly increased. This threatening swarm of writers will — unless we have misread the clinical record — soon be gasping painfully, and go the way of their literary forbears, *i.e., to the East.*

CLASS-WAR ON THE CAMPUS

BY HAROLD LORD VARNEY

THERE are words in our language which, through long usage, no longer convey precise meanings. Historic associations have transformed them into emotional bell-ringers, and men intone them, not to communicate thought, but to create reflexes of social action. One of these supercharged words is *freedom*. Any social or political cause which can attach to itself this magic name is certain to be accepted by a vast and unquestioning public. Conversely, critics of such causes, however great their provocation, find themselves publicly denounced as reactionaries and anti-Liberals.

Probably the most singular current example of such wordology is the national furor over "Academic Freedom". Strictly speaking, of course, the Academic Freedom campaign is a misnomer. Its promoters are not primarily academicians, nor are they lovers of freedom. They are, for the most part, agitators for Socialist and Communist social reconstruction, who are attempting to break down barriers

in the American school system which have hitherto prevented the indoctrination of pupils with anti-Capitalist ideas. But because these freedom-shouters have the adroitness to garb their propaganda in the magic phrases of traditional American Libertarianism, they have swung to their support a stupendous following of unsuspecting non-Radicals and intellectuals—a horde which included, at the height of the 1936 political campaign, even the Republican nominee for President of the United States.

It is easy to see how this condition has come about. On the surface, there is unimpeachable Americanism in the Academic Freedom issue. The idea that the public-school or university teacher should be penalized for expressing minority opinions has never been a tenet of the average American. Moreover, there has been a singular lack of finesse on the part of many Conservative school directors in dealing with the bristly problem of the Radical teacher.

Rightly or wrongly, there exists a widespread impression, sedulously cultivated by the Radicals themselves, that American education has been amenable to the censorship of stand-pat Capitalism. Thus the agitators for a changed educational program have seemed to be not subverters, but defenders of the real American spirit.

It was not, however, until recent years that the Academic Freedom issue became a serious factor in the schools. The pedagogical Radicals of the pre-Depression period were faction-torn, and aside from New York City, their voices reached little further than the slim membership of the Socialist and Communist Parties and the few readers of the *Nation* and the *New Republic*. But in 1929, two events coincided to change the situation. The first was the crash of the American business system, with its attendant deflation of the old economic ideas. The second was the unification of the Leftist ranks by the emergence of an astute leader, Dr. George S. Counts of Teachers College, Columbia University.

Although the educational Left had long enjoyed the inspiration of the two outstanding figures in American education—Dr. Charles A. Beard and Dr. John Dewey—it

had been retarded by the fact that neither of these prophets was possessed of organizing ability. It remained for Dr. Counts to transform their book-bound theories into terms of agitational action. Already, in 1927, he had become enamored of the Russian Communist experiment when, together with Rexford G. Tugwell, Prof. Jerome Davis, and Paul H. Douglas, he accompanied the Trade Union Delegation (afterwards repudiated by the American Federation of Labor) on its Russian tour. He returned to write a eulogistic *Educational Program of Soviet Russia*, and his enthusiasm soon made him the center of the growing group of Left-wingers at Teachers College. When the Depression touched bottom, Dr. Counts decided that the moment had come to issue a call for the Radicalization of the whole American teaching profession.

His call was preceded by a sensational report, published under the sedate imprimatur of the American Historical Association, announcing the end of American Capitalism. The technique through which the resourceful Professor was able to use this Association as the springboard for his revolutionary announcement is typical of all his subsequent feats.

It is the strategy of Leftist educators never to speak in their own Radical name when they can appropriate the sponsorship of a Conservative organization. In this instance, Dr. Beard, a former president of the Association, had persuaded his fellow officers some years before to authorize *A Study of the Teaching of the Social Sciences*. After preliminary exploration, \$300,000 was secured from the Carnegie Corporation to underwrite the cost of the survey, and a commission was thereupon appointed by the Association. Dr. Counts, fresh from his Russian trip, was appointed a member, as were Drs. Beard, Jesse H. Newlon, Guy S. Ford, and Carleton J. H. Hayes, also of the pronounced Left-wing group. When the final report was issued, only four of the sixteen commissioners declined to sign the anti-capitalist pronouncement, despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of the Association members are manifest disbelievers in such a point of view. It was a classic example of militant minority generalship.

Dr. Counts next proceeded to launch his major educational program—the publication of the *Social Frontier*, a magazine to unify the American teaching profession around a program of didac-

tic collectivism. Just as he had appropriated the Historical Association as a platform for his first pronouncement, he now proceeded to take over the pedagogical prestige of Teachers College as the support for his second venture. This, too, was shrewd strategy. For, in many respects, Teachers College is the Sanhedrin of the academic profession: each Summer, 8000 high-school teachers and principals throng to Morning-side Heights for pontifical instruction, and carry back to each State in the Union a profound respect for anything bearing the T. C. insignia. At the outset, Dr. Counts found a group of Left-thinking T. C. professors who had already been exploring the field of revolutionary ideas. Some of them—Goodwin Watson, William H. Kilpatrick, John L. Childs, Jesse H. Newlon, John K. Norton—were scarcely less Jacobin than Dr. Counts himself. Others not so easily classifiable, such as Harold Rugg, Clyde R. Miller, Edmund de S. Brunner, F. Ernest Johnson, and Bruce Raup, were nevertheless of the general Left-wing school. All were influential leaders of national educational thought.

In the Fall of 1934, the *Social Frontier* appeared. In addition to the Teachers College group, the

enterprising Dr. Counts exhibited on his masthead the names of Dr. Beard, Dr. Dewey, Profs. Henry P. Fairchild, Sidney Hook, and Robert K. Speer of New York University, Dr. Alvin Johnson of the New School, Dr. Harry A. Overstreet of City College, Dr. E. C. Lindeman of the New York School of Social Work, Prof. Broadus Mitchell of Johns Hopkins, Prof. Merle Curti of Smith, Prof. Byron H. Bode of Ohio State, and Dr. George A. Coe and Lewis Mumford. It was a powerful Left-wing aggregation. The program around which Dr. Counts mobilized this Brain Trust of prima donnas was the aforementioned "Academic Freedom". The *Social Frontier* editors and readers were to bore from within the National Education Association and other citadels of American educational conservatism and win them to the New Social Order.

But it was soon apparent that "Academic Freedom" had a vastly different meaning from its accepted usage. It became evident that freedom to be classroom propagandists for a non-Capitalist social ideal was the actual objective of the movement. Dr. Counts was refreshingly frank in defining his purposes. In his first issue, he proclaimed that the *Social Fron-*

tier "accepts as inevitable" the fact that "the age of individualism in economy is closing and that an age marked by collective planning and control is opening". Having led off with this familiar Marxian thesis, he next proceeded to pose the question: Shall educators in an age of such social change be neutral as between the defenders of the passing order and the agitators for the new? His answer was an emphatic "No!"

We submit to the membership of the National Education Association [he wrote] that its role in the life of the nation would be greatly enhanced if it identified itself with an ideal of social living which alone can bring the social crisis to a happy resolution — *a collective and classless society*. We further submit that the effectiveness of the NEA would be greatly increased if, instead of looking for defenders of education among the ranks of conservative groups, it would *identify itself with the underprivileged classes* who are the real beneficiaries of public education and who can find their adjustment only in a radically democratic social order.

Starting from these premises, it was inevitable that he should subscribe to the Class-Struggle theory, even though, for expediency's sake, he defined it in Beardian rather than Marxian terminology:

Events of the past century and a half have also led to the crystallization of the conflict of interests between the many who live by labor and the few

who live by the ownership of property. And education is helpless to reconcile this conflict. All it can do is to reveal the conflict and reinforce one group or another.

Having thus placed himself resolutely behind the two fundamental arches of the Marxian credo, Dr. Counts and his co-editors proceeded to formulate a program of action, a program which proposed to take the whole American teaching profession into the camp of social revolution. Roughly speaking, he explained, there are 1,000,000 professional teachers in the United States. They have in their power the shaping of the minds of the next American generation. They are in a position to "weight the historic process" and to "shift social forces to an alignment backing a collectivist economy of social utility":

If they but utilized the resources within their grasp, teachers could become one of the major forces in American life. Particularly might they aspire to such a position if they should choose to identify themselves with the masses of the people and refuse longer to make obeisance to the badges of wealth and rank. . . . Positively and consistently, they should seek to develop in the population those values, attitudes, ideals, and loyalties consonant with the new way of life, as well as habits of thought and action calculated to bring that way of life into being. . . . Whether working with children or adults, they should make clear the

fundamental conflict of interests which today divide society into opposing groups and make impossible the fulfillment of the democratic tradition.

Of course, to one who looks beneath weasel words, it is easy to detect the metaphysical trap in Dr. Counts' plausible writings. The Doctor, it will be seen, starts out by assuming as inevitable a social outcome which becomes inevitable only as a result of the acceptance of the Doctor's own program. Naturally, if one agrees with Dr. Counts that American Capitalism is dead, his elaborate program of indoctrination for a collectivist social order becomes inescapably logical. But if one rejects this initial premise — as the vast majority of the American people do — then it is plain that such indoctrination will have no other effect than to hasten a collapse of Capitalism, which might otherwise never occur. It is an astute attempt to accomplish the Socialist Revolution by psychology instead of by barricades.

What are the immediate steps which these "Academic Freemen" demand for the educators? First, the civil status of the American teacher must be redefined. Public-school teachers must repudiate their present classification as public officials subject to the imposi-

tion of a hated "Teacher's Oath". They must insist that, as teachers, their loyalties are in no way pledged to the existing political regime, and that they have the right to criticize the present social order in the classroom. Second, the rule of the school board or the board of trustees must be ended. Teachers must no longer be subject to lay supervision. The eventual goal is a self-administering school, in which the teachers will enjoy the autonomy of a self-governing guild. The taxpayer in the case of the public schools, the endowment donor in the case of the higher institutions, should have no function beyond that of paying the bills. Finally, the teachers must organize into trade unions and join the active Labor struggle for a New Social Order.

This program was summed up neatly by Comrade Roger N. Baldwin in a recent *Social Frontier* article. Defining Academic Freedom, the Comrade declared that "it is part of the world-wide conflict between reaction and progress—or, on its more specific fronts, between Fascism and Socialism, Capital and Labor, property and human life, violence and democracy". Teachers will not be able to "hold the lines" of educational freedom until they do it, "as

I have seen it done in recent months in France where great teachers' organizations are a unit in that diverse Peoples' Front, composed of every forward-looking element". Thus, by inevitable stages, Dr. Counts' "Academic Freedom" crusade reaches its end in the familiar United Front of the Comintern's party line.

II

In the face of such unmistakable revolutionary objectives, it is depressing to record that the Academic Freedom campaign has made extraordinary headway in practically all Conservative educational organizations. The most striking success has been in the National Education Association. This body, with its 200,000 members and its vast influence as the recognized voice of the American teacher at Washington, was for years an impassable bridge for the educational Radicals. At the annual NEA conventions every Summer, and at the mid-year gatherings of its Department of Superintendence, the Radicals appeared to offer their resolutions, only to find the great mass of organized teachers hostile. But in the Denver convention of 1935, the Leftists succeeded in crashing

through with a resolution committing the NEA to the "Academic Freedom" campaign. Not content with the mildness of the resolution which emerged from the committee, the *Social Frontier* group swept the rank and file delegates before them on the floor with a series of amendments which committed the Association almost to the full American Civil Liberties Union position. A permanent NEA "Committee on Academic Freedom" was set up, with William H. Kilpatrick, chairman of the publication board of the *Social Frontier*, as one of the five members. The decision was a momentous victory for the Countsians; it placed the NEA stamp of approval upon a program which had hitherto been recognized only by the minor groups of the extreme Left.

While the Radicals have thus been thrusting their camel's head into the Conservative educational tent, they have also been building their own Left-wing teachers' organizations. The best known of these is the Progressive Education Association. Originally launched to encourage experimental educational methods, this organization's early career was non-political — as recently as 1934 it secured a grant of \$50,000 from the Carnegie En-

dowment for the Advancement of Teaching. But within the last few years, the PEA has fallen increasingly under the control of politically-minded Leftists, until, today, the educational part of its program has been overshadowed by its "social" objectives, and it has come forward rapidly as an ally of the "new-social-orderites" on Morningside Heights. With John Dewey as honorary president, and with Harold Rugg, Goodwin Watson, Robert K. Speer, Boyd H. Bode, and Edmund de S. Brunner among its officers, there is a close interlocking control with the *Social Frontier* group. Under the influence of this new purpose, the annual conventions of the Association have degenerated into field-days for Socialist and Communist exhibitionism.

So paramount is the political interest of the PEA that Secretary Frederick Redefor, writing in the November issue of his official organ, *Progressive Education*, lamented that the NEA, through its new National Policies Commission, and the American Federation of Teachers are now "challenging" the leadership of the PEA. Since neither of these organizations is facing the social issue "as fundamentally as could the Progressive Education Associa-

tion", he urged that his organization "obtain the assistance of such leaders as Dewey and the Beards to interpret for us the meaning of democracy". Here we have another illustration of the familiar Counts-Beard obscurantist trick of talking in the language of "democracy" when the actual meaning of the proposal is an "interpretation" which will transform democracy into authoritarian Socialism.

An organization even more militant than the PEA is the American Federation of Teachers, now a chartered international of the A. F. of L. This is the organization which Dr. Counts contemplated when he declared at the 1935 PEA convention that "the teaching profession should unionize from kindergarten to college". The effects of such unionization upon the teachers are plain to read in the riotous chronicles of the Federation's career. Originally, the movement was a stepchild of the moderates of the Socialist Party: the founder and first president was Henry R. Linville, New York Socialist, also the parent of the New York Teachers Union. That Dr. Linville was not averse to co-operation with Communists when such action paid dividends is seen in the fact that his Federation received a grant of money in 1925

from the Communist-controlled Garland Fund. As the years passed, however, the influence of the Communists and the militant Socialists in the Federation became increasingly unpleasant. The conflict between the two Marxian groups finally culminated in the stormy convention of 1935 when Dr. Linville was deposed, to be followed, after the interim of a year, by the more extreme Prof. Jerome Davis of Yale.

The 1935 break was actually precipitated by the prior Socialist-Communist dogfight in the New York Teachers' Union which, with its 4600 members, is the controlling unit in the national body. The almost psychopathic situation in this model Countsian union was bitterly described by the Socialist, Dr. Abraham Lefkowitz, after he had been forced out by the more extreme elements.

For thirteen years the officers lived in a union Hell [he sobbed in the pages of the *Nation*]. During this time the union leaders defended Left-wingers whose infantile conception of revolutionary and labor tactics brought them into conflict with the educational authorities. Repeatedly Left-wingers exposed themselves to official reprisal by endorsing Communist Party candidates, by issuing factional attacks upon each other, and by other similar methods.

At the height of the controversy,

the extreme groups created a "United Committee to Save the Union", comprising Dr. Counts, Dr. Dewey, and the Rev. Comrade Reinhold Niebuhr. Thanks to their intervention, Linville and Lefkowitz were squeezed out and the New York presidency given to Comrade Charles J. Hendley, an acceptable Socialist Party member who approves of the United Front with the Communists. Since this is the teachers' movement which is graced by Dr. Counts with his membership and participation, it is only fair to assume that it is the pattern of the "union" which he would extend to the whole American teaching profession.

III

The extraordinary advance of the Academic Freedom movement since Dr. Counts took the helm indicates that *Social Frontier* Radicalism is certain to go much further in the American school system before awakened public opinion halts it. As in all borderline Radical movements, it is now aided incalculably by the inertia of the non-Radicals. There can be little question that the great majority of teachers and school executives are scornfully opposed to Dr. Counts' purpose to proletarianize

them. They have no inclination to be drawn into the bombast and the heroics of the Class Struggle. They can pump up little sympathy with the Academic Freedom outcry over the discharged teacher because their personal experience with campus Radicals has taught them that these martyrs are usually unpleasant and self-advertising fellows who have seized upon Radicalism, with its publicity opportunities, as a device for quick and unethical advancement over their Conservative colleagues.

Nevertheless, they are reluctant to oppose the Left-wing clique openly. Drs. Counts and Kilpatrick may represent a tiny minority, but it is a cohesive and log-rolling minority which is capable of making things markedly uncomfortable for Conservatives who, justly or unjustly, acquire the reputation of "Red-baiters". In this connection, the case of Dr. Frederick B. Robinson, president of the City College of New York, who has opposed Communist Party trouble-making at his institution, occurs disquietingly to the mind of the Conservative. Dr. Robinson's reward was the refusal of a LaGuardia-inspired New York Board of Estimate to include him in the recent salary increase which was given to his colleagues,

and to place him in the humiliating position of receiving a smaller salary than his subordinates.

Few Conservative teachers have Dr. Robinson's stamina to persist in their course under Radical persecution. They realize that in any controversial situation involving the Academic Freedom issue, the whole "Liberal" press will stand uproariously behind the Radicals, while the best that they may expect from the Conservative press is a restrained neutrality. The line of least resistance, they have learned painfully, is the line of inaction. And while Conservatism stands quiescent, the Radical minority surges forward to entrench itself in all the strategic positions of academic control.

In default of aggressive teacher opposition, the principal line of defense against academic Radicalism is the public-school board or the college board of trustees. Such lay bodies bring a common-sense and non-intellectualized viewpoint to their duties which is usually impervious to the ballyhoo of the "Liberal" press. Envisaging education in its broader significance as a preparation for citizenship, they are more alert than are the professional educators to the dangers of indoctrination. Hence, the Social Frontiersmen are vocif-

erously anti-Board of Education. In their speeches and writings, they wage a continuous guerrilla warfare against lay control of the schools. Their avowed goal is the self-administered school in which teachers, organized into swaggering trade unions, will be free to shape American education nearer their own heart's desire.

How the Academic Freemen will shape the schools, once they escape the shackles of the "Capitalistic" school board, is best indicated in a mind portrait of Dr. Counts which was drawn by his No. 1 disciple and present associate editor of *Social Frontier*—Dr. Norman Woelfel. In a recent book,¹ Dr. Woelfel gives a rhapsodical description of his hero:

Counts has progressed beyond any faith in either the Christian moral and spiritual tradition, or the economic tradition of Capitalism in America. He claims to have moved out into the raw open spaces of modern collectivist thought. And there he judges the American scene with a high degree of skepticism. America to a considerable extent fades out before the blazing light of modern Russia. The primitive and powerful new religion of Communism, which is rapidly becoming a fanatic passion among the Russian masses, inspires him with revolutionary ideals for America. . . . Counts would use the

¹ *Molders of the American Mind*, by Norman Woelfel. Columbia University Press; New York.

schools in good engineering fashion to hasten our transition from the fading old individualism into a blossoming new collectivism.

Such is the actual purpose of the "Academic Freedom" crusade. It is to be the engineering vestibule for a society conceived in the blazing light of modern Russia. Do America's "Liberal" educators re-

alize that this is the goal toward which the Academic Freemen are hastening them? Perhaps not, but their deeds proclaim that their hearts, if not their minds, are already straining toward the vision of the USSR, where education is conducted under the iron rule of a self-appointed *Führer* and his army of professional bureaucrats.



ELEGY FOR A YOUNG HOSTESS

BY GARRETT OPPENHEIM

THE cocktail party is over: the broken tumblers
 Like bruised mouths slobber the wood with amber drivelings.
 We praised the liquor, retched in the elegant privy,
 And alkalized on the terrace. You did not come to us
 There — there to watch the ruins of sunset crumble
 And smoke in the charred skies. But in the living room
 We found black coffee dancing on the trivet,
 And you, not dancing, white . . . the salts! . . . won't somebody. . . .

You shall not stand any more at the high parapets,
 Naming the landmarks. Neither shall you call to us
 From the tower lawns, nor more through twilight, carrying
 Trays of *hors d'oeuvres* among us.

Our hands faltering,
 We grope for our hats, we ebb in slow embarrassment,
 Avoiding each other's eyes in the quiet hallway.

EDITORIAL

The Rights of Labor

ONE strike after another is settled, but industrial peace is as far away as it ever was. Why is this? It is because industrial disturbances are now organized on an entirely new basis—the basis of politics. The country now pretty well understands that the seamen's strike was not called with any idea of benefiting labor; neither was the strike in the motor industry. Those strikes were incidental battles in a war which has for its object the control of labor for political purposes. The country, we repeat, probably knows this. What it apparently does not know is that as long as that war is allowed to go on, as long as it is countenanced by public consent or by public indifference which amounts to consent, there is no hope of industrial peace.

In any country that pretends to run itself on the democratic principle, the moment that an organized movement injects itself into politics, its doings become a matter of public concern. If a set of employees quit work because they are

dissatisfied with their hours, wages, or conditions of labor, that is a private affair; they are within their rights, and they should have them. If they injure or discommode outsiders, it becomes a public affair *ad hoc*; their conduct is actionable in behalf of the persons affected. If they go into politics as a pressure-group, it is a public affair absolute; the whole citizenry rightfully has a hand and a voice in it. The motor-car strike was clearly never a private issue between disaffected employees and General Motors; it was never an *ad hoc* issue pure and simple, involving the private rights of any person or group of persons, large or small. If this country be a republic, as it pretends to be, then from start to finish that strike was everybody's business; and this is what the public apparently has not yet got through its head.

We have the unrestricted franchise in this country, whether for better or worse remains to be seen; but that was our idea of democracy, and we saw fit to commit ourselves

to it so completely as to cut ourselves off from all chance of ever backing away. This was some time ago. One effect of it was to make the proletarian vote a potential political asset of the first magnitude. Politicians licked their lips and slavered at it for years. Given an unlimited franchise, under which low-grade labor, surplus labor (the unemployed and the unemployable), wastrels and hobos, all had votes, there was millions in it. The trouble was to make these votes deliverable. If this mass of voting power could be made to coalesce and become group-conscious, the trick was done; but the chance to do that on a nation-wide scale never came until the late Depression. Why the party in power in 1932 did not see that the chance had come is a mystery; it showed incredible stupidity. The opposition saw the chance, and turned the trick for themselves at enormous public expense, quite as the party in power might have done if it had been smart enough and unscrupulous enough. The opposition went ahead, consolidating its gains by an unprecedented liberality with public money and by the use of every device to stimulate group-consciousness and group-solidarity; all to such good purpose as to show a clear proletarian

majority at the election last year. For the first time in its life, the *Literary Digest's* poll proved something that was worth something; it proved beyond peradventure that this was precisely what had happened.

This, then, threw the mass-vote into national politics in a big way. Before this, the strictly labor vote — the deliverable vote — was not large, and the late Samuel Gompers never but once delivered it; that was to Woodrow Wilson, in wartime. But now the situation is different; the premium on bossism is immense. Mr. Lewis did not put this premium on bossism; the Administration did that. The Administration made some Mr. Lewis inevitable, and this particular Mr. Lewis simply happens to be the right kind of man in the right place at the right time, and if by any chance he be dishd, some other Mr. Lewis will be on hand to carry on after him. The temptation is too great to be resisted. The Administration brought Mr. Lewis's material together for him, shaped it up, and put it to a good welding heat in the furnace of group-consciousness. Is it to be supposed that this mass of voting power will ever lie for a moment without some Mr. Lewis trying to get control of it for political purposes? Such a

thing simply cannot be imagined.

The first flock of chickens came home to roost on the Administration's front porch during the sit-down strike against General Motors. In the course of that episode, Americans saw their government taking it tamely on the chin, not daring to enforce the law, not daring to say a word or take a step to range itself on the side of the law; a fine exhibition of misfeasance and poltroonery. When Mr. Lewis fronted up to the window and rapped on the counter, the President mildly lay down under his very pointed implications, and let his Secretary of Labor take the gaff; and that lady, instead of resigning on the spot, took it. We are glad to believe she did her best, but no one's best was good for anything in the face of the Administration's arrant truckling. If Americans like to see their starry flag wave over such a spectacle as that, all this magazine can say is that it wishes them joy of it, for we do not.

The next flock of chickens is on its way home, and the next, and the next, and so on indefinitely. In other words, industrial peace is indefinitely postponed. As long as an Administration is out to catch votes rather than to establish justice, and as long as organized labor

is prostituted to the service of bossism, there can be no prospect whatever of a regime of peace in industry or a regime of integrity in politics. It would be impossible for the present Congress to interpose the least obstacle to the progress of labor-bossism as exemplified by Mr. Lewis, and equally impossible for the Executive to recognize any such legislative action and enforce it. After four years of intensive high-pressure stimulation of group-consciousness, no Administration would now dare turn in its tracks, even if it wished to do so; and there is no evidence that the present Administration wishes to do so, but every evidence that it does not. No matter what it may wish, however, its past sins marshal it the way that it is going, like Macbeth's dagger, and that is not the way of justice, peace, and general well-being, but the exact opposite.

Nevertheless, there are some of our fellow citizens—no one knows how many—who are offended by all this and tired of it. They would like to see peace restored to industry and to see general well-being supersede the ravages of knavery, skullduggery, and ruthless personal ambition. They know that no conceivable combination of labor-bossism and political-bossism can ever bring this state of things

about; not all the connivances of all the Lewises with all the Roosevelts spewed up out of the Malebolge of politics since the days of Cain could ever do it. They are interested in fair play, in justice, and in knowing what justice demands. Therefore, they are presumably glad to know what other like-spirited people think that justice would demand in the present instance, and we accordingly offer them our basic ideas on the subject.

First, we think justice recognizes the right of any man or body of men to quit work at any time and for any reason or no reason, subject only to the obligations of contract freely entered into. It is the business of government to enforce the obligations of contract in these circumstances as in all others; and if the contract has been entered into under duress, intimidation, or through force of undue economic pressure amounting to duress, it should be held unenforceable.

The same principle applies to an employer. Justice requires that he should be free to employ whom he chooses, and to suspend employment as he chooses, subject to the terms of contract freely entered into; and any interference with freedom of agency in respect to the contractual relation should void the contract.

Organized labor bodies should be made responsible. It is scandalously unjust that one of the two active factors associated in the production of wealth should be held to a strict account of its actions and its finances, while the other factor is held to no account whatever. As things are, any Mr. Lewis may levy an assessment on his members to fight General Motors, and he is beholden to no one on earth to tell what he does with the money; not even the members who contribute it can claim a report. If General Motors, on the other hand, assessed its shareholders to fight Mr. Lewis, its officers would be immediately had up for a sweating by vindictive blackguards in a congressional investigation. Mr. Justice Brandeis said years ago that the irresponsibility of labor unions "tends to make officers and members reckless and lawless, and thereby to alienate public sympathy and bring failure on their efforts. It creates on the part of the employers, also, a bitter antagonism, not so much on account of lawless acts as from a deep-rooted sense of injustice arising from the feeling that while the employer is subject to law, the union holds a position of legal irresponsibility".

A deep-rooted sense of injustice—there you have it exactly. We

could use up a great deal of space in showing what a bad thing this irresponsibility is all round, for labor as much as for capital and for the public as much as for either, but at the moment we are not interested in doing that. We are now talking to people who, be they few or many, are capable of a sense of injustice, and who hate an injustice regardless of who gains or loses by it. Therefore, all we have to say about the monstrous legal discrimination which makes fish out of labor unions and flesh out of employers is that it stands as a piece of rank and contemptible injustice.

In the next place, justice requires that the injunction, as a weapon in industrial warfare, no matter against which side it be directed, should be done away with. It is essentially an instrument of tyranny; government through contempt-of-court proceedings is not a government of laws but a government of men, and this country is supposed not yet to have gone in for that. If either employers or employed exceed their rights, they may and should be penalized for it; but there is no justice in using a court order to anticipate the due process of law or as a mere convenient substitute for it.

Again, justice requires that no man should become an official of a

union unless he has worked at the trade or craft which that union represents, and is a member of that union in good and regular standing. There is no rightful place for the racketeer in industrial disputes. In recent years, New York has seen a series of strikes that were nothing in the world but shake-downs. They were straight rackets, violative of every right both of labor and its employer; and the blackmailing of either party, or both, by mere interlopers, irresponsible men who pushed their way into a position where they could make money by the mere threat of starting trouble, was a criminal outrage against justice.

Finally, justice recognizes certain rights as belonging to the public, as well as those of the employer and employed. Strikers have a clear right to picket a struck premises; no question about that, but they have no right to fill up a street with pickets and discommode pedestrian traffic. The object of picketing is to inform the public that there is a dispute going on, and this object is legitimate and proper. It is fully attained by the presence of two pickets at each entrance to a struck premises; mass demonstrations, the use of pickets who are not actual strikers, or in general the use of picketing as a mode of

propaganda or to sway the judgment of officials — or to intimidate officials — is a violation of the public's rights. It is an injustice.

So is a sympathetic strike which takes place outside the trade or craft in which the trouble occurs. Why should the public of Portland, Maine, be clapperclawed and bedeviled by a great strike of perfectly contented wire-goods workers — and incidentally, why should these contented men throw themselves out of a decent living — because the cloak-and-suit people of Portland, Oregon, are having trouble with their operatives? The thing is ridiculously unjust; and of course, *a fortiori*, so is the general strike.

These are our leading ideas on the subject, and we give them to our readers for what they are worth. As for the means of making any good ideas effective, that is another matter. Quite clearly, no interest in justice may be looked for from politicians or from labor leaders. From the viewpoint of simple straight justice, as we all have had ample proof of late, politicians and jobholders do not grade a peg above a professional criminal class; and the labor leader grades but little higher, if any. They are hand in glove in the nefarious enterprise of trimming

the worker, trimming the employer, and trimming the public, all in their own peculiar interest; and hence it seems vain to think they will detach themselves from these pursuits to take up with the dull and profitless business of trying to make justice prevail. So, what then?

We do not know. Sometimes we think we are the only people in the country who have no sure cure for everything and are not actively in the patent-medicine business. We wish we could offer some "constructive suggestions" about this matter of making good ideas effective — not necessarily our ideas, but any good ones which would really help out — but we have none to offer. We even sometimes suspect that there are none. Perhaps the industrial mess will never be settled until workers, employers, and public get tired of being trimmed and decide that simple justice is in the long run about the best business policy for all parties concerned. Perhaps they will then decide to get along without any hope of help from a professional criminal class, take the matter into their own hands, and front straight up to the dismal, hard, old sour-faced integrities which have been so long disparaged and are now so completely out of fashion.

AMERICANA

ARKANSAS

THE editor of a celebrated South-western journal takes the citizens of Marked Tree into his confidence:

We have finally and determinedly changed the name of this little mag to *Now!* The name *Now & Then* is a honey of a title, but a bit ambiguous. Many took it to mean Then & Now as related to past and present, instead of Now & Then, or occasionally, as the editor felt that he had a message worth printing.

CALIFORNIA

THE Hollywood Hairdressers' Association issues a subtle invitation to Lady Baltimore:

If Mrs. Wallis Simpson comes to California, and if she is observant, she can become more beautiful.

It Can't Happen Here, or The *Führer* Gets a Hymn of Praise, on page one of the Tujunga *Free Press*:

TO FRANKLIN DELANO
ROOSEVELT

E PLURIBUS UNUM

You are Power:
You have been granted a way to
strive,
Your way to Will is the way to thrive.

You are a Nation:

Your heart's the heart of a world, at
large,
You've shown us the way a man can
charge. . . .

You are the Leader:

First God . . . then you . . . thus, a
nation feels

For the man who pilots our new deals.

You are Us, We, and They:

You are Toiler, Brother, Faith, and
Will,

Each tomorrow will find you with us
still.

You are History:

Like a Moses you've come upon earth
To repeat a victor's aim, well worth.

And, so, to You, Franklin D.:

Dominus Vobiscum . . . have no
fear,

We're marching along with souls that
cheer.

EDITH HELFAND.

MINNESOTA

THE austere solons of a State legislature devote themselves to the New Science of Government, according to the scholarly St. Paul *Pioneer Press*:

The State House of Representatives
will recess for ten minutes at 3:30 P.M.
today to hear a talk by Joe Louis,
Negro heavyweight boxer.

FURTHER progress in the New Science of Government, as practiced
by the mayor of Warren:

PROCLAMATION

Know all Men and Women of Warren by These Presents:

I hereby proclaim that Saturday, September 26, be set aside as Warren Hamburger Day and request that all residents of the city dress and act accordingly in spirit of the day, and furthermore,

I hereby request that commencing Saturday, Sept. 12, and ending Saturday, Sept. 26, Sabbath Days excluded, that all Male Adult residents of the city wear the regulation Bibbed Blue Denim Overalls and urge all Women residents to join the Social Order of Long Skirts and comply with their regulations, including the wearing of the official Hamburger Day Buttons during the campaign. Citizens are requested to wear this conventional garb on the streets of the city, in their places of business and on all visits to neighboring cities and villages.

I hereby appoint William Forsberg as HAMBURGER SHERIFF, and invest in him all powers commensurate with the official duties of this high and important office.

OSCAR R. KNUTSON, Mayor.

MISSOURI

UNUSUAL opportunity for salvation offered to the economic royalists of the Show-Me State, through the want-ad columns of the distinguished Joplin *Globe*:

Church for sale. You can have your own congregation here and fire the preacher and choir; may be your only chance to get to heaven. Dolph Shaner Agency, phone 143.

NEVADA

AN enterprising citizen gets in a publicity plug for his home town,

as reported in the letter columns of the *Nevada State Journal*:

It might interest you to know that I have written a letter to King Edward today. Here's a copy of it:

Dear Sir:

The world admires your courage in choosing a charming and beautiful life mate. . . . If by chance the marriage is not successful, Reno, the world's divorce capital, will welcome you.

FRED PHILLIPS

NEW YORK

THE proletarian friends of the suffering Comrades in Spain spend a frugal evening in a penthouse cell, according to the sympathetic *World-Telegram*:

The editors of the *Nation* gave a party Tuesday night for Louis Fischer, their European correspondent, who has recently returned from Spain. It was held at the home of Maurice Wertheim — a beautiful penthouse apartment where fine paintings by Picasso, Gauguin, Degas, and other moderns adorn the walls. For an hour and a half Fischer answered questions about Spain and then the guests were stopped from asking any more so that everyone might eat, drink, and dance.

OKLAHOMA

A TOUCH of art is injected into the Oil Capital Horse and Dairy Show, as reported by the celebrated Tulsa *Daily World*:

In the bovine beauty contest, Netherland Bell Homestead displayed a

brand of mature charms ensconced in a glittering evening gown of red velvet trimmed with 2000 mirrors, which captivated the crowd and judges alike and which swept her into the proud title of the "It" cow of Oklahoma for the ensuing year. By the new queen's side, "Blessed Event", Bell's latest contribution to the dairy industry, was wheeled in a pure white baby carriage attended solicitously by two trained nurses in uniform.

Second-place winner went to Sweet Sue, a heifer daintily arrayed in pink. Jesse James, little gentleman calf arrayed in evening dress with silk topper, was third.

PENNSYLVANIA

THE editor of the Wilkesburg *Gazette* recounts his experiences during a tour of the nearby New Deal countryside:

While driving the family car south-east of Oil City, we ran into a length of road absolutely cluttered up with WPA workers. . . . At that moment a beagle bayed down over the ridge and, to a man, they dropped their shovels and went charging up over the brow of the hill. . . . After viewing this phenomenon from the car, I alighted and tore up the hill myself and discovered that nine out of every ten roadmen were fully equipped with a hunting license on their back and had arranged to lay a shotgun within easy reaching distance.

For forty men there were not more than twelve dogs, but those twelve were apparently sufficient to break up the monotony of the day by kicking out enough bunnies and an occasional ringneck to take their minds off a recent landslide on the road.

TENNESSEE

THE workings of the Holy Ghost in Stewart County are authenticated by the illustrious *Ledger and Times* of nearby Murray, Kentucky:

In Model there's a little home in which lives a young girl in her twenties who until four years ago was a normal girl. Last week crowds of people went in to see her standing barefoot, clothed in the nearest thing to sackcloth she could find, a tattered, sleeveless, shapeless garment, with her long, uncombed hair hanging about her face.

She has been standing in the same place since the 30th of May, speaking to no one but her mother, simply staring at the wall or occasionally smiling sadly as she mutters, "Do good work for Jesus and there will be great rewards in Glory."

Her mother says she has acted abnormally for four years and that she worried about her at first, but now she knows that the girl is working for some purpose and that soon her patience is to be rewarded and the powers of God will be manifested to the world.

The girl and her mother are members of the Baptist church.

The girl sleeps at night in a chair, but resumes her stand in the morning, though her legs are terribly swollen.

WISCONSIN

PROGRESS of the Republic's latest fad, as reported by the Associated Press from the thriving cosmopolis of Madison:

Ralph Rieder of Madison challenged the world today to surpass his

feat of piling 5011 matches in the shape of an inverted pyramid on an upright beer bottle.

"I could do better, but let someone beat that," Rieder said after four and one-half hours of painstaking work.

Rieder said he was 811 matches ahead of Dr. Thomas H. Staggers of Cleveland, who recently claimed the world's championship as a beer bottle match piler.

IN OTHER NEW UTOPIAS

CHINA

PROGRESS of the Uplift in the cradle of civilization, as reported by the *China Weekly Review*:

"Night life", which used to be very gay and which used to contribute to the prosperity of the city, now no longer exists in Canton. The New Life Movement restrictions have brought an end to all-night theatrical performances and other amusements, and all restaurants, tea houses, and stores must now close after midnight. With mah-jongg officially banned, restaurants and hotels have become exceedingly quiet and their business has suffered a sharp decline. The latest police order forbids persons from walking or riding in automobiles in the streets after midnight. The New Life Committee urges everyone to go to bed early and rise early.

ITALY

GROWTH of fraternal love in the land of *Il Duce*, as reported by the omnipresent United Press:

Hand shaking was ordered abolished in Italy today in favor of the Fascist salute. Signed by the secretary of the Fascist party, the order said:

"Those who continue to shake

hands rather than give the Fascist salute demonstrate a lack of Fascist spirit."

JAPAN

THE Mikado's government issues stern but euphonious rules for the guidance of English-speaking motor tourists:

1. At the rise of the hand of the policeman, stop rapidly. Do not pass him by or otherwise disrespect him.
2. If pedestrian obstacle your path, tootle horn melodiously. If he continue to obstacle, tootle horn vigorously and utter vocal warning such as "Hi, Hi."
3. If wandering horse by roadside obstacle your path, beware that he do not take fright as you pass him. Go soothingly by, or stop by roadside till he pass away.
4. If road mope obstacle your path, refrain from pass on hill or round curve. Follow patiently till road arrive at straight level stretch. Then tootle horn melodiously and step on, passing at left and waving hand courteously to honorable road mope in passing.
5. Beware of greasy corner where lurk skid demon. Cease step on, approach slowly, round cautiously, resume step on gradually.

USSR

PELLUCID gem of Marxian politico-philosophical thought, from Joseph Stalin's house-organ *Izvestia*, anent that glittering goldbrick, the new Soviet Constitution:

The extension of Soviet democracy is the greatest step toward the strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

THE STATE OF THE UNION

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

The High Cost of Dying

THE press not so long ago carried two news items which throw a strong light on the state of the Union. Two rich men, Senator Couzens and ex-Ambassador Straus, died within a few days of each other. Mr. Couzens did not leave a will, and the State took by taxation approximately one-third of his whole estate. Mr. Straus left a will; and it was discovered that he had added a codicil revoking something like a million dollars' worth of bequests to various philanthropic enterprises, because the taxes on his estate would be so heavy that piling these bequests on top of them would not leave enough margin of safety for his inescapable obligations and commitments.

There is more than one way of looking at the effect of levies like these. In general, the mere privilege of dying is not so desirable that the State should charge highwayman's prices for it. Again, it is a pretty serious question how far the State is morally entitled to interfere with the individual's post-

mortem rights. After all, Mr. Straus and Mr. Couzens got their money legally; they did not steal it. They took our economic system as they found it, and did well out of it. If the system is so loose that it enabled them to do too well, it can be tightened up. But tightening up the system is one thing, and confiscating money acquired in good faith is quite another; and here is the moral defect of all levies on production, and also of the commonly-accepted theory that taxes should be levied according to the ability to pay.

All this, however, would probably not be regarded as much of an argument against the State's pilferings from the dead hands of Mr. Couzens and Mr. Straus. What is more to the point, perhaps, is that such levies as these act as a brake on enterprise and ambition. They must act in that way. No doubt Mr. Straus disliked the thought that so much of his property would be stolen and wasted, especially since at the time he started out in business there was no such pros-

pect in view; income taxes and estate taxes are relatively recent. But now, facing the certain prospect of these exorbitant stealings and wastages, a youngster would be moved to think twice about spending his life in the absorbing labor of building up and carrying on an enormous business like that of R. H. Macy and Co. The State, of course, may be doing an unintended good by putting our young people in the way of realizing that there are desirable objects in life besides business and moneymaking. There is something in that; yet on the other hand, since the State's exactions continually increase, the diminishing of enterprise and ambition brings nearer the time when they can no longer be met, and when that time comes — and for quite a while before that — no worthy object of life is attainable.

The most common complaint of these levies, as we see in the case of Mr. Straus, is that they hamper the prosperity of existing philanthropic enterprises and check the launching of new ones. In an editorial setting forth this point, the *New York Times* says that contributions to fifty-three hospitals fell off from \$4,000,000 in 1930 to about \$2,500,000 in 1934. This is probably a fair indication of what is happening to

the general run of our privately-endowed and privately-financed institutions engaged in educational, social, or scientific work — schools, colleges, universities, asylums, libraries, museums, foundations, churches, research laboratories, settlements, social-service concerns of various kinds, and so on. As we all know, the country has bred a huge crop of these, established and financed from private revenues, and they view with alarm the unconscionable rate at which the State is drying up their sources of supply.

In some cases this may not be a wholly bad thing, for by no means do all these establishments earn their keep — far from it — though there would naturally be no great general agreement on what cases those are. Probably not many of us, for instance, would be much distressed if the Carnegie Peace Foundation folded up; while on the other hand, only a few of us — one of whom I am — believe that we would stand a far better chance of some time becoming a civilized people if about eighty per cent of our educational institutions, both private and public, were put permanently out of commission. Again, some of us may feel that the social-service business has been a good deal overdone; while, as we

see, great numbers of people are in favor of expanding it indefinitely. But as a general thing, one sees plainly enough that the sudden withdrawal of support from those institutions which have been founded by private means and which have gone on in full expectation of continuous support from the same sources, is an extremely serious matter. It involves readjustments that in large part must be experimental and therefore must require more or less time in order to work themselves out; and meanwhile the inevitable curtailments, interruptions, and dislocations of institutional service are bound to cause a great deal of inconvenience, and worse than that, a great deal of actual privation and distress.

This is a valid ground of complaint against the action of the State, and our organs of opinion are fully justified in making the most of it. But there is something else at stake which is much more serious, incalculably more serious, than the prosperity of our philanthropic institutions, or even than their life. What happened to Mr. Straus' estate and Mr. Couzens' is a rather conspicuous instance of a process which is going on all the time, and has been greatly accelerated of late; a process of which

some of us — unfortunately not many — seem to be more or less vaguely aware, but which we do not precisely understand and identify, and still less do we see clearly the inevitable end towards which it moves.

This process, which exactly resembles the process of cancerous growth and is in the end as deadly, is the continuous *conversion of social power into State power*. These terms are perhaps unfamiliar. Social power, exercised through what we call "private enterprise", has built the whole material structure on which our civilization rests. Our production of wealth, our industry, commerce, and finance, our whole elaborate system of distribution, are due to the exercise of social power. State power has done nothing in a positive way to aid this development, but a great deal to retard it. In a negative way, State power has done something, by punishing certain coarser forms of robbery and fraud, and by enforcing certain modes of contractual obligations. These benefits or assistances, however, are greatly outweighed by the disabilities which the State has put on this development, chiefly through various delegations of its taxing power, but also through vexatious measures of regulation and supervision.

The State, precisely like a cancer, is always seeking to aggrandize itself at the expense of the body on which it feeds; that is to say, at the expense of society. The State has no power of its own, just as it has no money of its own. All the power it has is what society gives it, plus what it can confiscate from time to time, as opportunity offers; and every gift or confiscation of power leaves society with that much less; and since the State, cancer-like, directs its power always towards the maintenance and enhancement of its own interests rather than those of society, the general social structure weakens, and in the end disintegrates, leaving the State also moribund, having nothing more to feed on. As Professor Ortega y Gasset says, since "after all it is only a machine, whose existence and maintenance depend on the vital supports around it", when those supports disintegrate, "the State, after sucking out the very marrow of society, will be left bloodless, a skeleton, dead with the rusty death of machinery, more gruesome than the death of a living organism. Such was the lamentable fate of ancient civilization".

In discussing the revocation of his bequests, Mr. Straus cites the fact that "increased estate taxes . . . are devoted in large part to

governmental social programs". Here Mr. Straus recognizes a direct specific conversion of social power into State power; and the general consequence of such conversions is to discourage the further use of social power in the same direction. I noticed the other day that in one of our large cities, a campaign for Relief funds had gone flat. People would not contribute; they said, most naturally, "The State is already confiscating our money for this purpose, so go to the State about it." In New York City, where a special sales tax has been imposed for local "Relief", this is the natural, instinctive attitude of the citizen who is approached by a beggar. Up to four years ago, distress was always taken care of by the application of social power; since then, that particular fraction of social power has tended to become inert, and meanwhile the State has confiscated a great deal more than its equivalent.

Every positive intervention by the State has just this effect. Its interventions on industry and commerce, whether by direct competition or by regulation and supervision, result in the progressive atrophy of social power and the corresponding enhancement of State power. Now if it were true that State power is, or can be, exer-

cised even measurably in behalf of society's interests, something might be said for this; but it never is so exercised. The fact is notorious — everybody knows it — that it is exercised in behalf of the State's interest. It has always been so exercised, and still is, and apparently will always be. Leaving aside the spiritual factors of discouragement and enervation, and taking money alone as a measure of power, we see that the State is now confiscating, directly and indirectly, nearly one-third the national income; very well, estimate the enormous political brokerage that comes out of this sum annually, and balance it against the amount devoted to all public purposes that by any stretch of reason can be called legitimate! This is merely one handy illustration out of many that could be offered — handy because it lies on the surface of things and is easily apprehended — of the normal operation of State power. It may be observed here that collectivism, which is the culmination of this process of conversion, appears to rest on the naïve assumption that if only *all* social power be confiscated and converted into State power, the State will somehow change character at once, and will operate in society's interest instead of its own; or rather, that the two

sets of interests will somehow be brought into correspondence. There is manifestly no reason whatever why such an increment of power should produce this effect, but quite the contrary; the assumption is pure nonsense.

Thus it may be seen that the incident of Mr. Straus and Mr. Couzens is useful because it points straight to the one and only tendency in public affairs that is much worth thinking about at the present time. Focussing our minds on the ups and downs of dictatorships, monarchies, presidencies, parliaments, or whatever form or mode the State may take on, is really very little to the point, because this tendency can go on, and does in fact go on, equally well under any of them. The thing to watch is the conversion of productive social power into non-productive State power; and the thing to apprehend is the disaster ensuing on the culmination of that process. The Roman Empire went to pieces because in that process, social power became so atrophied that no one could do any business or get enough to go on with, nobody could eat right, and there was not production enough left to pay the State's bills. All ancient civilizations shared this same fate, and ours is in the way to share it.

THE BOOK PREVIEW

THEODORE DREISER¹

BY FORD MADOX FORD

I FIRST came seriously in contact with Dreiser in late 1914 . . . and the event, as all the major events of an existence are apt to be, was for me rather symbolical. I was Battalion Orderly Officer in Cardiff Castle at the time and I had for years been writing for the *London Outlook* — in which I had an interest — a weekly article about anything that came into my head. . . . And it was a symptom of the naïveté not merely of myself but of the ordinary public-school Englishman of my day that I should be shocked by the howls about German atrocities that were going up from the more lively and excitable press. I wrote therefore a pained editorial in the *Outlook* suggesting that it would be a good thing if the Press in commenting on the proceedings of the Enemy Country should do so in terms of the “Gallant Enemy”, as had been the case in the Napoleonic wars and the Middle Ages. I disliked thinking that civilization should in these matters have receded six or seven hundred years. War, I thought, should be conducted along the lines of some sort of polite Queensberry rules before a well-conducted audience such as you see every fourth of July in the grandstands at Lords’ for the Eton and Harrow match that closes the London season.

And it was symptomatic of the rather languidly Tory audience of the *Outlook* of those days that my article evoked no protest from my readers, save for one letter written by a very old lady who said that, if I wanted the Enemy forces to win, I was at liberty to do so, but that it was rude to say so in public. . . . Nevertheless it had become obvious to me that for my sort of philosophy the times were quite out of joint, and I signified to the editor that I should probably do his paper harm and I would prefer to give up writing for a London audience. He asked me to go on writing for him, but I was rather out of tune with writing at all in those days and finally he sent me *The Titan*, asking me to review it as a farewell pledge of friendship.

If you could turn up the review that I wrote you would be — I hope kindly

¹ Excerpt from *Portraits From Life*, to be published this month by Houghton Mifflin, Boston. Copyright 1937 by THE AMERICAN MERCURY, INC., and Houghton Mifflin.

—amazed at the unsophisticated pain of the little, young, naïve, correct soldier man who, standing on his feet before a guardroom window, had written it, almost in tears. . . . Because, whatever you may say for or against it, *The Titan* is a milestone on the long road of our civilization.

Reading again today that cool project of the career of Mr. Yerkes who was later to cause no end of a storm in the teacup of London transport finance, I am amazed to find that it is really not such hot stuff after all. I don't see why, things being as they are, Mr. Yerkes shouldn't collar the tramway system of his adopted city. Everybody does — or tries to. I don't see why he shouldn't be promiscuous. Everybody is today — or is said to try to be. No, *The Titan* does not shock me today. It is just a rendering of normal life a few years ago when life was simpler and less corrupt, and reading it I find myself unconsciously regretting that Cowperwood didn't bring off his final trolley coup and have a more agreeable time with women. If you sell your soul to the devil, I mean, you ought to see that you get a good price.

But, back in the second decade of this century, the Big Words were still alive, so *The Titan* very naturally made one's gorge rise. The Big Words — Loyalty, Heroism, Chivalry, Self-Sacrifice, Probity, Patriotism, Soldierly Piety, Democracy, and even Charity which some translate as Love, and Discipline, and Conscience — those big words and the golden naïvetés that they stood for were probably in that year going stronger than they ever before had gone, certainly in officers' messes and guardrooms and no doubt outside, for all I know. The War had given them an extraordinary life with which to give their last kick. We were going — all volunteers at that date — to damn well *make* the world fit for Heroes and Democrats and Patriots. . . . Christendom, that was what it was going to be. And absolutely safe for the Taxpayer, too. Because for us the lowest and most repulsive of all vices was malversation of public funds. . . . That really was so. . . . Well, there was probably a time when you too thought like that. . . . Unless you are very young!

Anyhow, there I stood before the guardroom window, looking out on the battalion prisoners, crouched at the feet of the high elms munching hunks of bread . . . and what I wrote with my fountain pen was an unconscious keening for the world that was to pass away.

I am pretty sure that even at that date, *The Titan* was not the first book of Dreiser's that I had read. I know I had in the back of my head for many years some idea of *Sister Carrie* as an agreeable fairy tale of an entirely cheerful kind, a sort of glowing, goldenish spot in the weariness of the world. . . . And I don't know that now, when I have re-read the book a couple of times, I don't feel much the same . . . and I shall probably this afternoon take an-

other read in it just for my own pleasure. There can be no higher compliment paid by one novelist to another. At any rate when ten or a dozen years ago I had my first eccentric meeting with Mr. Dreiser and when Mr. Dreiser said hurriedly that he had read all my books and liked them very much, and I had replied just as hurriedly that I had read all his and liked them very much too, I was not lying as hard as he . . . for if I said that I liked *Sister Carrie* very much it was the exactly right phrase. And by that time enough water of horrors had flowed under the bridges of the world to make me regard *The Titan* as merely a record of normal life. And, as for *The Financier*, when I had read it in, say, 1919, it had struck me as another pleasant fairy tale in which a mildly amoral and not unpleasant character had found his sufficiently agreeable happy ending with promise of wedding bells complete. . . . And at that date, as far as I knew, *Sister Carrie*, *The Financier*, and *The Titan* were all the books that Dreiser had written. I had forgotten *Jennie Gerhardt*, which I had not liked . . . and which I went on and go on not liking. I can't help it if, as I suspect, it is Mr. Dreiser's ewe lamb. At any rate it is the only one of his books which I ever heard him mention — several times and as if with regretful affection. . . . But indeed it is the only one of his books which I ever heard Mr. Dreiser mention.

I am not, at any rate for the moment, criticizing Dreiser — the spirit, the method, the impulse, the whatever it is that has hurled his books at us. I am merely stating likes and dislikes — which is a very difficult thing. Let us be explicit. . . . There is Stendhal for whose methods I have the very greatest admiration. He is perhaps the type-writer as conscious artist, and his French is impeccable, flawless, like Toledo steel . . . Toledo, Spain. . . . But I don't like him and except for *Le Rouge et le Noir* I can't read him . . . not his *Chartreuse de Parme*, not his writings on Love. But poor dear old Flaubert, who was another shouting berserker, I like and can read all the time, though today he is much out of fashion in the country of the Lilies. So I like and can read Dreiser except for *Jennie Gerhardt* — and she depresses me. I hear you say: "How is this? This man is denying his Gods."

But it is not so. It is only that this man is like other men who after half a century, or a quarter, or a decade or a luster or a year or a month or a week of sedulous bus-driving takes a busman's holiday . . . each according to his necessities. So during fifty years or so of sedulous bus-driving . . . or no, it is rather more like the occupation of the ringmaster. When you are a conscious writer you watch your subjects, your characters, your words in particular as you put them down . . . as if they were lions, wolves, or plaguey little cats performing on the sawdust of the ring. And, "Crack!" goes your long whip and they skip into their places and Columbine goes

slick through the paper hoop and lands beyond on the white horse's back like a gull on the wave-crest. . . . And at the end of fifty years or so — if you are any good — you can make the beastly little things called words do what you want even when your back is turned or your eyes closed.

Only, at times, you know, it is wearisome, that job. You get so that you want to write like a drunken Irish carter galloping a wagon load of split infinitives down a blind alley on a Glasgow Saturday night. And then, afraid of yourself; afraid that if you go on in that mood you'll really get yourself into trouble with the critical Police and lose your job and see your children starve and your name dishonored, you throw your inkstand — like St. Dunstan — at the wall and say — or at least I do — “Damn it all. Let's go and ride with Dreiser and see how he gets his old bus along.”

And I guess — and I am not using the word vulgariter, I am really hazarding the conjecture — that is why, for his country and for the world outside, Dreiser is a Dr. Johnson, or a Flaubert-plus-Balzac, or a Wagner or a Tolstoi or a Michelangelo or . . . I can't think of any others for the moment, but there are two or three more . . . men who outpass nationality as now and then peaks from the sea bottom transcend their fellows, and emerge beneath the skies. I am not of course appraising. Dreiser may be as great as Michelangelo, or Tolstoi, or Wagner, or less great or more. When you are beside a mountain you can't see its relative importance . . . but you can judge the nature of its stone. And Dreiser has the gift of universality. . . . If you like to call it American-ness you can — in the sense that a sort of uniformity has everywhere over-run the Western world so that they are eating nearly as many and nearly as filthily indigestible canned products in Paris today as they are in Chicago. In that sense Dreiser is even hyper-American, for London devoured his products with avidity thirty years before there was any Dreiser-consumption at all, anywhere between Terre Haute and Sandy Hook. And that was not generosity in the London critics. Or, yes, perhaps it was. But it was also because the London critic saw himself as he would like to be if he could be it without being discovered — in the figures of Cowperwood or Sister Carrie or the Genius. . . . As later the American *homme moyen sensuel* saw, but for the grace of God, himself in the hero of *An American Tragedy*.

II

To me it is magnificently symbolical that Dreiser should have been born in Terre Haute, since that town has the aspect of being the very navel of the country. And it is French in name and Papist in origin and very largely

German-speaking . . . or Irish or Swedish or any old language but English. And in Terre Haute, two queer, nationalist-internationalist spiritual adventures happened to me before ever I knew that Dreiser had there been born . . . typically enough in a German, Catholic, lower middle-class family. In, that is to say, a stratum of society that developed itself in the early decades of the nineteenth century between those of the least wealthy tradesmen and the cream of the mechanics — the children, let us say, of upper servants, sewing-machine drummers, and non-articled lawyers' clerks. It was a very definite new stratum that arrived all over the world at about the date of Dreiser's birth and that, under the stimulus of a compulsory education very superior to that paid for by the upper and middle classes, was beginning to see the expediency at once of getting rid of the Big Words for which they had no especial use and of getting a grasp on all sorts of reins of power. . . . For it was not for nothing that there arrived almost simultaneously not only, in America, Dreiser, and in England, Mr. Wells and the late Arnold Bennett . . . but amongst Teutons, Latins, and Orientals, Mr. Hitler, Mr. Mussolini, and Kemal Pasha and Sun Yat Sen, all of them set on reducing the whole world to a sort of common denominator and all born to that stratum of society. . . . And that was so too even in Ireland where Sinn Feiners threw off the yoke of proud Albion, and in how many other small nationalities! . . .

Most of all it symbolizes for me the eclipse of the proud, real Middle-Class, Anglo-Saxon domination of the world . . . an image that came to me in Terre Haute itself. . . . I was sitting, that is to say, some years ago, at two in the morning, with the window open and door ajar in the guest house of the Convent of the Holy Child near that city. I was playing solitaire — which is also one of the occupations of Mr. Dreiser — because the intolerably efficient central-heating of that hospital spot made it impossible to sleep. The door pushed itself open before the form of the local policeman. He said:

"Ye're English, ain't yez? . . . I've come to tell ye I hate yez because of the sorrows of the Dark Rosaleen."

His father had been born in County Sligo, but he himself had never been outside Hoosier-land.

. . . And next morning, waiting for an automobile to take me away, I was looking listlessly at the program and accounts of a local Americanization Society. A thrill went slowly through me. I had observed that all the Americanizers had names like Eltsheimer, Nielsen, Lobkowitz, Guertli, Wellenhausen . . . and those they were working to Americanize were called Drake, Hopkinson, Marsh, Masters . . . and I heard myself say, *Fuit Albion et magna gloria Victoriae*.

So, when a day or so later, I heard that Dreiser had been born in that place,

it gave me a mental shock that crystallized a great many images for me. I don't know why, but somewhere in the corner of the mind where inaccuracies are stored, I had hitherto thought that Dreiser was a born Philadelphian who had passed most of his years editing a newspaper in Baltimore. It was before the period when he had had the opportunity to use me as a mental punching ball and I had found him to be usually gently and almost wistfully speculative, inclined rather to listen to me than to indulge in tirades. . . . Indeed, on the occasion of my first meeting with the author of *The Titan*, we had for a period of three or four hours talked of nothing but words and styles, and Mr. Dreiser had been so completely in agreement with me that I had taken him to be a larger and gentler Conrad. He had disliked assonances quite as much as I did . . . and the writing of Mérimée, Balzac, and of all other writers whom it is proper to condemn. And we had agreed completely as to the mainstream in the history of the novel . . . as to its passing from Lope de Vega and the Spanish picaresques, by way of Defoe and Richardson, to Diderot, Stendhal, and Flaubert, and so to Conrad and James and the writers of the then just-awakening Middle West. . . . Indeed, Mr. Dreiser seemed to know quite as much of the technique of writing as I did . . . and I gave him mental credit for knowing a little more. So that, in that perverse corner of my mind, I had summed him up as any other Anglo-Saxon *generosus, filius generosi* who had got his learning at one or other of the older universities of Penn's State and had pursued his studies of Latin civilization and letters in the otiose editorial chair of one of the more august Baltimore instructors of the public. I *knew*, you understand, that that could not be the fact. . . . But one's instincts nourished by inflections of the voice and mildnesses of the mind are so much stronger than mere knowledge. . . . Indeed, I don't know that to this day I don't go on somewhere at the back of my mind believing that Mr. Dreiser is a gentle, highly-cultured being, of an immense erudition and a wistful desire to penetrate always deeper into the interstices of pure learning . . . that that is what you would find him to be if you scratched beneath the surface.

But on the Chicago day, after I had left Terre Haute, when someone brutally and with official print, in *Who's Who* or something of the sort, convinced me that Mr. Dreiser had been born in Terre Haute in such and such a milieu and such and such circumstances, it was as if an immense new pattern of the world revealed itself to me. And I am glad that the revelation came in that way — after I had satisfied myself by personal observation that Mr. Dreiser was something quite different. Had I, I mean, been convinced before I met him that Mr. Dreiser was some sort of literary hobo, I might well have taken on myself some such attitude as that of Mrs. Frank Double-

day and have gone on with averted nostrils calling for musk whenever his printed page swam before my eyes. . . . As it was, when I came upon some of his words that are no words, odd grammatical solecisms, and the other harsh oddnesses that at times affected me as if someone were thrusting a sharp needle upwards through the seat of the chair I was occupying, I thought according to my mood that they must be due to indifferent proof-reading, haste, ignorance of English compositors setting up Middle-Western expressions — or merely to the fact that Dreiser knew what he was about and was trying after effects hitherto un essayed. And I had had the extraordinary readableness of his books to confirm me in that last view. You have to remember that the English literary scene with which I was till then most familiar is one of a uniform sedateness that resembles the surface of a duck-pond completely covered by a North American water-weed whose name I cannot for the moment remember — something like *Ina Canadensis*. So that when anything really exciting came along, the English critic was apt to be far more enthusiastic than his transatlantic confrere . . . which is why so many of the really American writers from Whitman and Crane to Dreiser have received their accolades in London whilst their home critics and public and publishers and their female relatives were still delicately fainting at the thought of them.

And then . . . nothing was ever more true than that *mal d'autrui n'est que songe*. To Mrs. Doubleday and the typesetters of Messrs. Harpers and Colonel Harvey and all the rest of those who blocked Dreiser's career, Dreiser was an immense big black wolf who would make the world unfit for their delicate susceptibilities, corrupt their young children, block their ambassadorial careers at the Court of St. James where Cowperwood's final female companion was *persona grata*. . . . There were, in short, a hundred reasons — but a hundred thousand! — why the writings of Dreiser should be a pain in the neck . . . and an immense one that they all sensed without putting it to themselves in words. . . . They felt in their bones that Dreiser was not merely a big bad wolf but a mastodon-symptom of an Ice-Age, an immense, slow-moving convulsion of a continent that when it should have passed would leave neither them nor their houses nor their names, their accents, their syntaxes, their baby-talk, nor their world any more observable beneath the indifferent skies that spread from Maine to the meridian and the Occident.

To the English critic, all these pains were not even dreams. They were unaware that they had any Terre Haute, any Middle West; they were certain that they had no Dreiser to disturb the *Ina Canadensis*. And it is fun, when you spend your life aping sedulously the language of the front page of the *Times Literary Supplement* so as eventually to ensure your own appearance

in that House of Lords of Reviewers. And, mind you, that is not an easy job. It calls for years and years of real good behavior. . . . Damn it all, it *is* fun to see that poor old vehicle for conveying moderated thoughts having the guts kicked out of it, like a deflated football, over all the fields of the boundless Middle West. . . . Don't believe that it was only Taine who felt an irresistible urge to shout at afternoon teas in Oxford drawing rooms the word of Cambronne.

III

Mr. Dreiser obviously is untidy . . . but he has to be untidy in order to be big. He wants you to read immense wads of pages; you could not do it if they were my peachstone carvings. I know that he cherishes wistfully the idea that one day in a great good time and a great good place he will go through all his books, smoothing out excrescences, restoring neologisms like "objectional" to their original form of "objectionable", introducing *charpente* into his frameworks and giving to all his novels *progression d'effets* framed in words of an impeccable justness. Because Mr. Dreiser knows all about all those things. An immense, omnivorous reader with one of the most tenacious memories that the world can ever have seen, he knows as much about literary technique as about brokerage operations. . . .

There was a German philosopher called, I think, Weininger, whose landlady's daughter would not let him seduce her. So he wrote an immense — I believe that it is in Germany a standard — book to prove that all women were rachitic nitwits. In the course of that work he had to prove that no woman had ever possessed genius. So he said that genius was made up of immense memory; no women ever had good memories; therefore no woman could ever be a genius. . . .

I think that, in his discovery that genius and vast memory were commensurable, that blind hen, as the Germans say, had found a pea. The writer of vast memory has an ease of production and in consequence a sureness that can never be aspired to by a writer who must document himself as he goes along. He can produce his instances without delay and, most important of all, he never has to force his subject around so as to bring in a second-rate instance. The difference between a supremely unreadable writer like Zola and a completely readable one like Dreiser is simply that if Zola had to write about a ride on a railway locomotive's tender or a night in a brothel, Zola had to get it all out of a book. Dreiser has only to call on his undimmed memories and the episode will be there in all freshness and valor.

If you want an image of him at his writing, you have to imagine him

standing like a compositor before the forms of his mind. He stands at a considerable height, back on his heels, passes his fingers through the forelocks of his silver hair, pauses for an instant, and then like lightning his hands dart in and out over the types. He has instance A, a reporter at a lynching; instance X, a farmer seeking his lost Phoebe; instance I, a man realizing that though he is free by the death of his wife, his hands must fall powerless at his side, for the only freedom for him is that of death. . . . And so on through instances #, \$, %, & Z . . . each instance a memory out of years back of yesterday, of points here and there and anywhere on the span of a continent or so. And each memory becomes as it were a letter, a color, an illumination, and so, with immense speed, the pages build themselves up and become books.

In the revolution of the sounding ages, Dreiser stands for the emergence of the Teuton-Slav over the surface of a world till yesterday given over to Latin and then Anglo-Saxon cultural dominance. . . . It is that aspect of world change that he voices as Defoe voiced London of the Plague, Lope de Vega, Spain, and Petronius Arbiter, Rome . . . or Homer, the Age of Bronze. . . . I am again not making appraisals. When you read Dreiser the North American Republic has lost its Anglo-Saxon, Victorian aspect to such an extent that you might say it has become an apanage of the German one. Or of any Scandinavian Socialist kingdom. Or, still more, as I have adumbrated, that it is undergoing an evolution that is part of a world convulsion. For the same is true of almost every unit of the Western world — and of many Oriental congeries. We are all of us going finally away from handicrafts towards a life characterized above all things by an eschewing of all sedulousnesses. We all wear shop clothes because the solitary tailor, cross-legged on his bench, is a distasteful image to our mass-production minds; we all — in whatever nation — use words in which Bowery suffixes of Oriental origin are tacked onto Hellenic, Teutonic, or Latin roots. And with that wordological time-saving we have leisure to lounge from cafeteria to movie in long afternoons of untroubled bliss. . . .

It is because he renders for us this world of fantastic incertitude that Dreiser's work is of such importance.



THE LIBRARY

History's Perfect Rascal

BY JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

SANTA ANNA, by Wilfred Hardy Callcott. \$3.00. *University of Oklahoma Press.*

FOR some years there has been a growing consciousness of our large and attractive neighbor immediately to the south: the United States of Mexico. A century ago, Texas was one of its provinces. Ninety years ago, by force of arms and some negotiation, but mostly by force of arms, we had from it our whole Southwestern quadrant of States. The Border commonwealths have been, as it were, Mexico-conscious all the time, and frequently uncomfortably so. When good Don Porforio ruled the land, capital enjoyed there the lushest fields of investment. In the years immediately before Armageddon, our National Guard lay long in arid camps upon its border, having, in profound boredom and insect bites, a sharp foretaste of the horrors of war. But last year they completed the motor highway that pierces down from La-

redo on the Rio Grande, through Monterey and the mountains, to the great plateau of Mexico and the fabulous Capital itself. And now trippers from the Middle West, in tudor sedan jobs with trailers attached, dismay the stringy chickens of the Aztec children in villages that Cortez knew; and stone-age Indians peer from behind rocks at young people from Houston, running down to Mexico City for the week-end.

There is good entertainment in Mexico, and the people, even the lowest of them, possess a courtesy and a dignity which our hurrying compatriots may at once admire and envy. Hotel accommodations will compare favorably with those along US 75, between Dallas and the Tennessee line at Bristol: the food will offer unexpected ardors, and the local drinks merit respect and discrimination in tasting.

Also, there will be dark girls in the cabarets who have all the tropic languor and the tropic fire, and slim guitar-playing fellows of romantic aspect and ringing baritone voices. There is fine golf at Mexico City, and already several colonies of artists and writers scandalize the simple natives of the vale of Anahuac with their goings-on.

The serious-minded will find treasures of authentic antiquity in the National Museum, and they will find, also, if the tactful curator has them on exhibition, certain U. S. battle-flags, taken from Taylor's regiments in the Mexican War: there are not many of those flags at large, and never were, outside of the late Confederate States. They have also the pale blue, fringed banner of the company of New Orleans Grays, which is the flag that flew over the Alamo Mission in San Antonio, in the year 1836, when a Colonel Travis and his hundred-odd rugged individualists made a great to-do about dying in that place.

If, then, you heed the advertisements which begin to appear in the slick-paper magazines, and adventure the Southwestern journey, a useful volume to take along, for both entertainment and instruction, is Dr. Wilfred Hardy

Callcott's life of Santa Anna. Because it was Santa Anna who first brought Mexico to our attention in any effective sense; and Santa Anna was, in effect, Mexico itself, through at least one highly eventful generation.

In the year 1810, the Emperor of the French sat firm on his throne at Versailles, with Europe as his footstool, posturing to the terror and admiration of the world. The United States pursued, with praiseworthy self-abnegation, the policy of neutrality which was leading us inevitably to the second war with England. Robert E. Lee was a child of three years, his anxious mother just removed from Stratford on the Potomac to lodgings in Alexandria. One Abraham Lincoln was a long-limbed child in the slashings of Illinois. Weary old Spain was becoming dimly aware that her ever-loyal colonies grew restive under the benevolences of the Most Catholic King. And that year, in June, the Royal Regiment *Fijo de Veracruz* admitted to its rolls the cadet Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna of Jalapa, which is a pleasant town 4000 feet above the sea, as you climb out of the pestilential *tierra caliente* on the Campeche Gulf, going towards the high plateau of Mexico.

The fact of the cadet's admission

testifies to a certain family standing. The commonality were not eligible for the Spanish Officers' Corps, even in the colonies. It may be taken that the Lopez's of Santa Anna were respectable. Said to be of ancient and honorable Basque lineage, the father was an eminent mortgage broker of Veracruz, and his cash helped, no doubt, as much as his social standing, since there was a little matter of falsifying the cadet's age to get him enrolled, he being two years younger than the King's regulations allowed.

We are to infer that Cadet Don Antonio, strutting in the green and gold and white of his regiment, had no education to speak of. There is record of an attempt his father made to interest him in business: but he was not, he relates in his memoirs, meant to be a counter-jumper. His desire was all for arms.

Before he was a year in service, the Hidalgo revolution, forerunner of Mexican independence, was flaming in the Northern provinces. Hidalgo fought the battle of Calderón and was reported thereafter fleeing to the United States, across the province of Coahuila-Texas. Orders were sent Colonel Arredondo of the *Fijo de Veracruz* to get 500 men into the field after him; and they went up

by sea, Don Antonio with them, in the year 1811. From that year until his old age, there was hardly a season that he was not somewhere on campaign.

The expedition pointed for the Texas coast, but the navigation or other matters went wrong, and they landed in Tampico, and struck out overland. Arriving in the theater of operations, they heard that Hidalgo had been captured and the revolution finished: but the news did not deter the conscientious Arredondo, Santa Anna's commanding officer, from undertaking the pacification of the region. This entailed, after the thorough-going custom of the place and period, interesting destructions, confiscations, and slaughters among a set of prima-facie rascals, for the main part defenseless: and the young cadet distinguished himself above others by his zeal and valor. His reward was a promotion, and transfer to the cavalry, where, presumably, he would be able to cover more ground. He is reported to have defeated, with thirty horsemen, some 300 Indians, and the record indicates a capacity for cunning as well as courage.

The Hidalgo *putsch* stamped out, the Viceroy signaled Arredondo to return to station, but it

appears that Arredondo shrank from having his regimental accounts audited, and events favored him: trouble broke out in Texas. There was always trouble in Texas, where white North Americans were taking up land; and in 1813 Arredondo was sent above the Rio Grande to appeal to their better natures: they had, it appeared, defeated and scattered the army of Elizondo. Abridging the details of the campaign, the operations culminated in the fight called the Battle of the Medina, between Laredo and San Antonio. Some 850 rebels, North Americans, were ambushed by the strategist Arredondo, and according to the historian Bancroft, only ninety-three of them escaped. Some 112 prisoners were taken, and immediately shot: and some 200 captured a few days later in San Antonio were shot also.

Santa Anna received a decoration for gallantry above and beyond the call of duty; and he received something more important in his career: the impression that terrorist tactics succeeded with Americans.

The campaign in the North lasted for five years: in those days as in these, the Spanish had a talent for prolonging military operations. Don Antonio's promotions tell the

tale of his service: he was a captain in 1816, charged with important semi-independent missions, and a lieutenant-colonel of the Viceroy's selection in 1821. This, surely, must have been one of the last Royal Spanish commissions granted in Mexico, for the colony was all at once in full tide of rebellion. The *insurrectos*, headed by Iturbide, sent Don Antonio, on the same day, March 29, 1821, a full colonel's commission in the new Republican armies. For an ambitious soldier, there could be but one decision. Santa Anna changed his coat with the agility that was to dazzle his countrymen throughout the next generation, and joined the armies of freedom. You wonder what would have happened if the penurious Viceroy had offered to make him a brigadier general.

Thereafter, Dr. Callcott, with praiseworthy exactness, traces the tortuous ins and outs of Mexican politics through the revolutionary period, the ramifications of which had a fervor and a variety unknown to the colder Northern races. Iturbide did not endure. His break with General Santa Anna — naturally a general in quick time — came as it was bound to come, and other *politicos* seized the government. In the year '29,

the Spanish King made his final effort; he set a Viceroy and a punitive expedition ashore at Tampico to reconquer his colony of Mexico. It was Santa Anna, then Governor of Veracruz, who took an army north and defeated the invasion; and Mexico was free and has remained so.

The next five years were perhaps the best of Santa Anna's life. He accumulated a great estate in the vicinity of Jalapa, and married a fine country lady who looked after it for him, while he went up and down the land displaying a magnificence of person, a profusion of elegant mistresses, and a stable of fighting cocks, that excited the admiration and affection of his people. In a sense, the general knew his limitations: he had neither taste nor talent for administration, and he was content to serve as head of the army, with the customs revenues firmly in his grip, while some puppet *presidente* sat with a subservient congress in the Capitol and attended to the tiresome details of government. He went from strength to strength, but in 1836 the large and troublesome Texas province, now grossly over-colonized by North Americans, declared its independence and set up some absurd government or other on the banks of the Brazos.

President and head of the army at the moment, Santa went north in person to set matters right. He had always been lucky in the North, and he had the formula for dealing with revolutions. It is told elsewhere, in enthusiastic South-western grammar-school histories, how he crossed the Rio Grande with some 5000 men, a very considerable army: and how he overwhelmed the Alamo outpost with a notable butchery; and how he dealt with the Goliad detachment; and how, leaving his heavy troops, he pushed across the breadth of Texas with a swift column of picked men, to catch and destroy the elusive rebel forces, who, under an adventurer named Houston, retreated rapidly before him. The chase ended on the prairie where the San Jacinto River joins Buffalo Bayou, of an April afternoon, in the siesta hour. There, in about fifteen minutes, was fought one of the decisive battles of the world. When it was over, General Santa Anna was running for his life, and his army had ceased to exist. The next Winter a Mrs. Lynch, landholding in those parts, made heavy claims upon the Texas Republic for the ruin of her cow-pasture, so polluted by Mexican corpses that her cows got sick and died.

Santa Anna had a bad time

when, after some months of captivity, he returned to his country and had to explain what he did with the huge Northern province, now lost forever. Other men took over the government, while he sulked on his estates. Yet, in 1838, a French admiral seized Veracruz over some money claim or other, and it was to Santa Anna that the Mexicans turned. He sprang to arms like Cincinnatus and rushed at the French landing force in the moment when, having accomplished its punitive mission, it was re-embarking; and had his leg shot off for his pains. But it was the season of the Northerners, and the Veracruz coast is a bad coast, and the French admiral went on his way, leaving a grateful people to elevate again to their high places the mutilated hero. The rest of his life, that lost leg served Santa Anna well. He became dictator, largely on the strength of it, was widowed, and married a brash young wife, Dona Maria Dolores. But in 1844, they turned him out again, and he went into exile with his family, his game cocks, and a fortune of 30,000,000 pesos.

Our war with Mexico broke in 1846, and it was entirely natural that Santa Anna be recalled: Mexico always turned to him. He landed through the American

blockade at Veracruz to universal acclaim: there is some suspicion that he made a deal with the North Americans to smooth things out, if they would pass him back into the country. However that may be, he found his people ardent for war, and he took the field with an army and rushed north to meet the United States invasion under General Taylor, coming in from Texas; he met Taylor on the Satallo plain, and fought a very respectable battle there. We don't talk much about it; but Taylor never went any farther into Mexico.

Santa Anna then turned, a revolution against him having broken out in the Capital, and rushed south again. By the time he put it down, with much bloodshed, Scott was ashore at Veracruz, and the aging general raised another Army, marched east, and fought, across the road to the Capital, a whole series of actions. Again the end was exile. But a general who could make the two divergent campaigns of 1847, over every difficulty of distance and terrain, with neither stable government support nor organized forces, was no indifferent soldier.

It is a long story. Four times more he was exiled; three times he was recalled. His people could neither get along with him nor

without him. In 1874, they allowed him to return to Mexico, an old and ailing man, hobbling on a peg-leg, his vision obscured by cataracts. He had outlived both his enemies and his glory, but he had saved enough of his loot to spend his last years in comfort, and to die decently in his own bed. The press of the Capital was not unkind to him when he died. He lived eighty-two years.

In a country where men are habitually lazy, Don Antonio was unflaggingly energetic: that was

enough to make him conspicuous. For better or for worse, he guided Mexico throughout her formative period. He had military talent, and aptitude for war: as long as his tough body served him, there was never a fight for fifty years that he did not do his best to get into. He was constant in one thing and one thing only; and that thing was treachery. A pungent, raffish personality, he will be remembered over better men. And perfection in any line, even in rascality, is always interesting.



ELEMENTARY TEXT

BY ELEANOR A. CHAFFEE

WHAT would man be if he had not his reason
To keep him anchored in this strangest land,
Where beauty besieges, in and out of season,
And love is a light wind passing over his hand?
Love, that he thought surely would be a tower,
He learns is less than a dream, and turns to find
Something to serve him with enduring power:
Something not dwarfed by uncompromising mind.
Where would he be, this mortal, in his awaking,
Did not the weight of his logic hold him down?
Wild and bitter fruit is not for the taking:
No harvest flowers in the stony town.
So is clutched close the stone that is not bread,
But on whose substance many a one is fed.

THE OPEN FORUM

THE RIGHT OF FREE LAUGHTER

SIR: If it isn't too late, may I offer a few words of dissent in regard to the editorial in your November issue which advocated punitive measures against Comrade Browder and his associated American Communists on the ground that their political and economic philosophy inevitably leads to violence?

Now on the proposition that it would be most undesirable for Comrade Browder to function as the Lenin of an American Soviet Republic, I heartily agree. Offhand I can't think of any greater catastrophe that could befall America, or any other country, than a duplication of Russia's past two decades of civil war, terror, famine, wholesale shootings, capacious concentration camps, and general enthronement of bigotry and sycophancy. Where I differ with you is in regard to the most hopeful means of preventing any such development. And I think historical experience is on my side when I submit that, paradoxical as it may sound, just those countries which have given the Communists the greatest freedom of expression have the least reason to fear waking up some morning to find the Hammer and Sickle displayed over their capitols. The three countries where Communism has displayed the greatest strength — Russia, China, and Spain — have scarcely accepted John Stuart Mill's *Essay on Liberty* as a guiding principle of political and administrative action in the past. On the contrary, the lands where speech and press and assembly have been freest, where elections are honest reflections of popular sentiment and not bad jokes, have not been bothered by the spectacle of many Communists in high places. I am referring to the United States and Canada,

Great Britain, the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Belgium. At the last American election, Comrade Browder got the suffrages of a little over one in a thousand of his fellow-citizens. At that rate of progress the Communists will be electing their first congressman or mayor some time in the twenty-first century.

The American Communists are funny, not formidable. The show they put on is *opéra bouffe*, rather than high tragedy. Could anything, for instance, be more comical than the spectacle of the Communists, sworn foes of all religion, making their "United Front" with the Negro showman, Father Divine, who gives himself out as "God"? Or how about Comrades Israel Amter, Michael Gold, Isidor Schneider, Joseph Freeman, and Company trying to drape themselves in the togas of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Dan'l Boone? A few hearty laughs, rather than appeals to the District Attorney, would seem to be in order.

A certain type of ignorant or unscrupulous reactionary habitually abuses the term *Communist* very much as Communists and muddle-headed Left-wingers overwork the word *Fascist*. Legislation directed against Communists would very probably be misused in labor disputes which are an inevitable, if regrettable, feature of a free economic system. This, in turn, would generate precisely the spirit of social bitterness in which Communism flourishes.

I can't help thinking that a hard-hitting, iconoclastic, independent magazine like *THE MERCURY* committed a tactical error when it editorially favored any curtailment of freedom of speech, on the ground that its

abuse might some day lead to violence. Couldn't a zealous New Deal prosecutor make out something of a case of potential, constructive treason, arson, and mayhem against THE MERCURY on the basis of some of its more blistering denunciations of President Roosevelt and all his works?

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

Manila, P. I.



PAPERWEIGHT SHIPS

SIR: In the January MERCURY, Mr. Fletcher Pratt suggested that Japan may have violated the naval limitations agreements by building "10,000-ton" cruisers which are much larger in fact. Mr. Pratt's conclusions are based on two points: (a) that Japan is the one power which has never given specific displacement figures for certain of her ships, and (b) some of these Japanese warcraft seem too fast, too heavily protected, and too well-armed to stay afloat on a displacement of 10,000 tons.

Now I would be the last to accuse Japan of clinging to any treaty whose provisions are not to her satisfaction, and it is possible that some of Japan's ships exceed the weight limits. But it would be a mistake to assume that the Japanese have produced designs against which our products would stand no chance. Why Japan fails to give the exact displacement of some of her ships, I do not know. If they *are* overweight, it would seem logical for her to list them as of, say, 9975 tons—a figure which would be less apt to create suspicion than a vague 10,000. There are, however, three factors which explain much of Japan's ability to load her cruisers with such a seemingly impossible weight of guns, armor, and machinery. The first is that the average American sailor is nearly six feet tall, while the Japanese is likely to be around five feet. The second reason is that Japanese crews can endure living conditions Americans wouldn't tolerate. The third is that the Nipponese naval architects are the world's most optimistic designers.

Since the crews require less head-room, Japanese designers can crowd decks a foot closer together than can American and British constructors. This may not sound like much of an economy, but it saves several hundred tons in hull weight. Furthermore, the Japanese house a large part of their crews in deck structures, which permits a further reduction in the cubic capacity of the above-water hull. Of course, the deck-houses add as much cubage as this expedient subtracts from the hull, but they do not add as much weight.

British and American designers know that paperweight ships may be world-beaters *on paper*, and yet worthless as practical fighting units. This reality has made little impression on the minds of the eager Oriental naval constructors. Japanese cruisers can outrun America's best—in fair weather. But you can't fight a war with rain-checks, and many of these Jap ships are ludicrously inferior in speed in even a moderate sea. Why? Simply because their hulls are so light that bow-plates buckle and frames bend when put up against rough water. A lot of Japan's treaty designs have been docked time after time for the replacement of plates and the fitting of new bow frames. Most of them have been "beefed-up" by now, but they remain weak, and the patching must have played hob with minor, but important, features of the original design. Less than a year ago a new Japanese cruiser fired her guns while going through trials. The first salvo cracked the welds of her hull plates, let her oil into the sea, and permitted salt-water to pour into her fuel tanks. She drifted, helpless, and had to be towed back to Kobe for reconstruction.

Then there is the question of stability. The Japanese have saved weight, but they haven't left enough above-water hull for stability, and, to make the situation worse, they have built fantastic superstructures of guns, masts, deckhouses, catapults, torpedo-tube mounts, range-finder stations, and fire-control platforms. Japanese warcraft have the smallest metacentric height in any navy,

and American designs the greatest. And metacentric height, without going into detail, is what keeps a ship right side up. None of the larger Jap treaty craft has capsized as yet, but several of the smaller ones have turned over in squalls, and Japan has been taking a lot of top-hammer off even its pre-treaty battleships. But most of the top weights are there to stay, since they are vital to the functions of the ships.

These cluttered superstructures make the Nipponese craft not only topheavy, but also exceptionally fine targets — targets so festooned with turrets and torpedo tubes that any hit is apt to strike a magazine or the war-heads of torpedoes. One object of American designers has been to minimize vulnerable spots. Japanese designs, in contrast, are one big vulnerable spot all over. Mr. Pratt mentions that some of them have more extensive armor belts than our own craft. Well, they need them!

FRANK PRESNELL

Chillicothe, Ohio



THE AKRON STRIKE

SIR: As a former employee of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, I was greatly interested in the "Case History of a Strike" in the March *MERCURY*. At the time of the strike, I was a member of the Goodyear general office squad. This is a group of approximately twenty-five recent college graduates. They spend varying periods of time training and working in each of the major office departments of the company. Due to the exigencies of the strike, we were unable to gain admittance to the office for about five weeks, though fortunately the management saw fit to pay our salaries in full during this period.

The article is most informative, even to one who was on the strike front. I should imagine that it would cause quite a stir in Akron's management, white-collar, and Radical groups. If it doesn't, it should. The article states that "the articulate citizens

failed to comprehend . . . that there was nothing to negotiate", and that the closed shop was the only real issue. This fact, of course, was never mentioned by the Labor leaders, nor by the hysterical Akron editors who tried to please all factions with their vapid attempts at human-interest stories along the picket lines and in the sheriff's office, and their emasculated peace-at-any-price editorials.

My associations in Akron were among presumably intelligent college graduates. They failed utterly to realize the true issue. I was fortunate in being in indirect contact with certain accurate sources of information concerning the policies and beliefs of the management. The officials of the leading rubber companies knew that John L. Lewis was the motivating power behind the strike. They believed that he hoped to make an opening wedge into the automobile industry by getting a strangle-hold on a basic, subsidiary industry. I couldn't persuade any of my friends of this fact. They thought the whole idea utterly fantastic.

In one respect, I think the article is incomplete. Very little mention is made of the legal aspects of the Goodyear strike. As you no doubt know, there was a long drawn-out injunction suit brought against the union by the company. As everyone with an IQ above 80 had foreseen, mass picketing was declared illegal. After this dictate by the Summit County Common Pleas Court, precisely nothing happened in regard to upholding the law. The disgusting conditions of anarchy in East Akron continued unabated. We all know that the basic cause of this social and political breakdown is found in the pro-CIO policy of Dr. Roosevelt, and his clever scrambling for the mass moronic vote.

Heretofore *THE MERCURY* has been undaunted in exposing the Administration's assault on traditional American principles and laws. Why did you not outline the breakdown of law-enforcement during the Goodyear strike, together with the causes as found in local, county, State, and national

politics? Or would you have been treading on too many toes?

RICHARD H. GOEBEL

Westfield, N. J.



THE UNION OCTOPUS

SIR: Your February issue contained an article "Steel vs. John L. Lewis" by Gordon Carroll, which induces me to write to you in the hope that THE MERCURY will start a real campaign to unmask this appalling Union Octopus which is getting such a strangle-hold on American labor and life as to become the most dangerous evil to American welfare and national peace ever dreamed of.

It is unbelievable to the average mind what "unionism" means to the American workman and the rest of the nation. We are the *victims*, we who are forced into it and kept there by the most vicious and rootless system of coercion known—but we dare not speak. They (the Big Shots) stop at nothing! Not even murder—to say nothing of boycott and starvation. Beatings and gangings are everyday occurrences in the pages of unionism. Every now and then some one who dares to rebel is found stretched out in a lonesome spot. Every union in the country has open relations with the underworld and the gangs that derive a fat profit from such relationship. The workers pay, strike, and starve for the benefit of the Big Shots, and nobody dares open his mouth.

The government that has investigated everything and everybody from Morgan to Dr. Townsend never thought of looking into the workings of the biggest racket in the country. Don't they know that ninety per cent of the union ranks are made up of exploited men and women who would welcome with tears of joy the coming of a new Michael who would have the courage to cut the head of this, the most vicious dragon of all times?

They made so much fuss about the few dollars collected (not forced out) from the

people by old Dr. Townsend; why does no one try to find out what becomes of the millions collected by the Big Shots of unionism? Or is some one getting a "cut"?

For God's sake, let somebody do something before our very lifeblood is squeezed out of our tired muscles, and before every citizen in America is made to pay tribute to moguls of Labor for the right of breathing.

A WORKINGMAN

Pittsburgh



WHO GIVES A DAMN?

SIR: The reactions of the public to Dr. Roosevelt's last message—to date, at least—would appear to prove Mr. Pollock's case in "America Doesn't Give a Damn" up to the hilt.

Here is a proposal which, to put it mildly, gives reasonable promise of making the federal judges subservient to the Executive. If enacted and carried out, the form of our government will be fundamentally altered. One would expect millions of people to instantly take sides on the question and to engage in argument. But I haven't heard anyone yet who has been very deeply moved one way or the other.

E. C. WATSON

St. Petersburg, Fla.



MAKING THEM BLEAT

SIR: I want to thank you devoutly for furnishing us some of the most uproarious fun extant since the Democrats nominated Al Smith and played him off against Bill McAdoo and the Ku Klux Klan. I refer to the strident wails of anguish and the gnashing of teeth and the beating of breasts, all emanating from the general direction of our little Comrades, the Pinkos and Slightly Scarlets.

It is necessary to begin with the *a priori* belief that THE MERCURY, like any good journal governed by men of stout heart and sober minds, assumes that all government, whatever its form, is the natural enemy of

man. Of course, this assumption raises the very Old Harry. It makes the Republican raise up his tremolo in a shaky protest, with what wrath he is able to muster after the Bubonic Plague that swept amongst us last November. It makes the Democrat hitch up his Jeans-Of-Many-Political-Colors and wipe his thumb clean of Farley-Hopkins-Prendergast pie, long enough to thumb his nose at such unholy doctrines. But strangest of all, it makes the Pinko and the Comrade wail just as piercingly as if Commissar Stalin had run a pike-staff several centimeters into his *gluteus maximus* and hoisted him to the top of the Kremlin for all kneeling Muscovites to gaze upon, and straightway mend their ways.

I like THE AMERICAN MERCURY. I think it ought to be continued. I like to see all kinds of practicing idealists and professional uplifters yell; and I am damned if I know which kind squeals the loudest. But I do know that THE MERCURY makes them bleat, and that is quite enough for me.

EDGAR I. BAGGEN

Minneapolis

AN ORCHID FROM WINCHELL

SIR: I am dictating this between scenes on the set. Mr. Pringle's piece, "Portrait of Walter Winchell", was good reporting, I thought. I am glad that it was not one hundred per cent favorable to me, because people don't believe those things, or even finish reading an article when it is too nice. The thing that pleased me most was his staccato pace.

I am sorry Mr. Pringle feels that I protect my sources by not writing things about them. This is not true, for if a friend had given me an item, and later I heard a piece of news about him, I certainly would print it. Not that I have ever crossed any of my sources or deliberately run anything that would be offensive to them. I haven't done that even to my worst enemies. I think I told Mr. Pringle that it would be suicide for

me to reveal my sources of information, and I believe he misunderstood that.

WALTER WINCHELL

Hollywood

P.S. I just received an airmail letter from New York City saying that THE MERCURY is having quite a sale in Manhattan. The individual continued by saying that he had procured the last copy from the newsdealer at City Hall. The dealer wanted to know what it was all about — as it was the first time he had ever sold out THE AMERICAN MERCURY. I dare you to print that!

W. W.



THE PUBLIC vs. H. L. M.

SIR: I am not a believer in the dole, either for "bogus farmers" or any other class, yet in Mr. Mencken's article "The Dole for Bogus Farmers" which appeared in the December issue of THE MERCURY, I find many statements which arouse a sense of injustice. The author of it is either grossly misinformed, or else willfully overlooks facts for the sake of telling argument.

I wonder just how much time Mr. Mencken has ever spent in the Dakotas, "the very Zion of the eternal but bogus Farm Problem"? I venture to guess but little more than the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt did in what Mr. Mencken refers to as "his famous non-political tour of the region last Summer", a tour which amused and embittered the residents of the real drouth section of South Dakota. The Presidential entourage passed through that section in the night!

I refer to that portion of the State east of the Missouri. Twenty, fifteen, ten, even five years ago, no observer as intelligent as Mr. Mencken could have passed through it without noting evidences to belie his statement that "even in fortunate years the resident yaps barely get enough to eat, for they are too stupid and too lazy for subsistence farming, and the one crop they condescend to grow is miles and miles from the market. . . ." No farmer barely getting

enough to eat is going to build a twelve-room house; a barn to hold twelve head of work horses, as many milk cows, with bins to contain from twelve to 2000 bushels of feed grain, and mows to hold twenty tons of hay; up-to-date hog houses to shelter from twenty to fifty farrowing sows in roomy pens. And the observer must have been guilty of the most determined blindness to have overlooked the fields of barley, oats, and corn interspersing the wide fields of wheat; the green stretches of alfalfa on which grazed hogs numbering into the hundreds; the mile after mile of wire fence built around cultivated fields to allow Fall grazing for those same hogs after the harvesting of the corn or other grain; the herds of cattle feeding in the pastures adjacent to every farmhouse.

I lived in South Dakota fourteen years. The communities in which I lived were typical, I believe, of the eastern half of the State. As the wife of a farmer, I resent the classification of them as "inferior men", suffering from incurable "congenital deficiency". The very doggedness and loyalty with which many of them are clinging to the homes and the land they love, in the face of tremendous odds, seems to me to argue the possession of the "pertinacity" which Mr. Mencken says they lack.

My husband and I are of less heroic stuff than those farmers still battling back there. In 1933, after seven years of the drouth, we pulled out. We had lost practically everything we owned except the modern house we had built and the eighty-acre homestead. We could see nothing ahead but the dole, and decided that if the government were going to have to keep us, it might as well do it somewhere else. We came to Oregon. We avoided Relief, but for over three years we have looked in vain for a farm with the soil of those home acres!

I am not pleading the cause of the dole. I wish simply to see justice done. I consider the disaster which has befallen the farmers of the Dust Bowl a real one. They are not

men to cry mercy and this business of the dole is bitter medicine.

MRS. R. S. EBBERT

Westlake, Ore.

SIR: Have read *THE MERCURY* the past four months, the first time it has ever been on my desk. Have read and re-read every article by Mr. Mencken. Also have noticed some very severe criticism of his writings. Personally I think he needs a world of support, and appreciate the way *THE MERCURY* upholds him. Also admire you for the stand taken on the New Deal.

In the December copy, the article, "The Dole for Bogus Farmers", sure hits the spot. A few years ago I worked in a Southern State and was shocked at the stupidity of a large portion of the population. The poor white or tenant farmer, who never tries to raise but one crop a season and never prepares for Winter, is shameful. Also I found that the poorer and more illiterate they were, the more children and dogs they had. Statisticians say our birth-rate has fallen off. They, in one sense of the word, are right. Of the right kind of people, yes. However, of trash and downright perpetual paupers, there are too many being born yet. I have seen such people moved into decent living quarters; also, I have seen the same quarters turned into pigpens in a very short time. Being in the healing profession, I know the conditions in that field. I couldn't let the work you are doing go by without commenting upon it.

FRANK H. PEASLEE, D.C.

Pekin, Ill.

SIR: I have just concluded reading Mr. Mencken's article in this month's *MERCURY* and I am now convinced that his brain has shrunk to the same proportion as the magazine. He sure trembles at the thought that he and his friends may not be able to live in the future by cutting dividend coupons. Poor pitiful fool!

NICHOLAS CARNOVALE

Chicago

(Continued in back adv't section, p. xx)

THE CONTRIBUTORS

ELEANOR A. CHAFFEE (*Elementary Text*) lives in Ridgewood, New Jersey, and writes articles, verse, and children's stories for various periodicals. FORD MADDOX FORD (*Theodore Dreiser*) is visiting America in conjunction with the appearance of his new books, *Portraits from Life* (Houghton Mifflin), and *Great Trade Route* (Oxford University Press). FRANCES FROST (*The Birds*), the prolific young poetess, is currently represented by a volume of verse, *Road to America* (Farrar & Rinehart). EDWARD HARRIS HETH (*Death of a Lady*) is a young Wisconsin dog-lover and writer of short stories and novels, whose most recent book, *Told with a Drum* (Houghton Mifflin), was published early this year. W. F. KERNAN (*The Poison Gas Myth*) is a major in the United States Army, who received his education at Tulane and Harvard universities. Major Kernan translated Marshal Foch's *Conduct of War*, and has contributed several military articles to THE MERCURY. RALPH LINTON (*One Hundred Per Cent American*) teaches anthropology at the University of Wisconsin, and is the author of *The Study of Man, an Introduction* (Appleton-Century). FRANK MONEY (*The Horse-and-Buggy Farmer*), who now lives in New York City, was formerly a livestock breeder in Rhode Island. GARRETT OPPENHEIM (*Elegy for a Young Hostess*), son of the late James Oppenheim, writes verse for newspapers and magazines in New York. J. H. OPPENHEIM (*Autopsy on Chicago*), a native of Chicago, has been connected with various publishing ventures. He now practices law in Illinois. CHANNING POLLOCK (*You Can't Be Unlucky*), author, dramatist, and lecturer, began to earn his living at the age of fourteen. At various times he has been a truckman, a press agent, and a dramatic critic. DANIEL W. SMYTHE (*Rock's*) is a young writer who operates a poultry farm near Haverhill, Massachusetts. ROBERT STRUNSKY (*Ponzi's Golden Bubble*) is a member of the editorial staff of the New York Sun. ANTHONY M. TURANO (*Syphilis: Mrs. Grundy's Disease*), a practicing lawyer of Reno, Nevada, contributes frequently to THE MERCURY.



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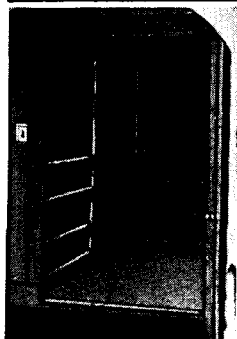
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***†† *Symphony in E Flat (Eroica), Beethoven:* (Columbia, six 12-inch records, \$9.50). The greatest of all symphonies, superbly performed by Felix Weingartner and the Vienna Philharmonic. This is Weingartner's first recorded *Eroica*, a brilliant example of his fine sobriety and thorough honesty as a musician. The opening chords are distorted by considerable echo in the hall, a fault which occurs at several later points, but in other respects the reproduction is splendid.

***††† *Symphony, No. 4, in E Flat (Romantic), Bruckner:* (RCA-Victor, eight 12-inch records, \$16). One of the most-discussed and least-played of composers, Bruckner is gradually winning representation on records. This performance, by Karl Böhm and the Saxonian State Orchestra, is as persuasive as any could be, though the final impression of Bruckner remains: a minor composer with aspirations to grandeur. The score is performed in the original orchestration, not that commonly used. Böhm is a thoroughly capable conductor, and his fine orchestra is beautifully reproduced.

***†† *Symphony in D Minor, Franck:* (RCA-Victor, six 12-inch records, \$12). A re-issue of a celebrated symphony, by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Contrary to similar jobs with other works, Stokowski has not "revised" his interpretation, and the performance is generally unmarred by idiosyncrasies. The twelfth side offers an orchestral transcription of Franck's *Panis Angelicus*. The recording, apparently a studio performance, is very good.

VOCAL

***†† *Traum durch die Dämmerung und Ich Schwebe (R. Strauss) and Mondnacht (Schumann):* (RCA-Victor, one 12-inch record, \$2). This disc by Elisabeth Schu-



RECORDED MUSIC

mann is notable for a superior performance of *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, one of the finest available for the phonograph. The other songs are also well-conceived, but Mme. Schumann's vocal strength is, alas, rapidly declining. Karl Alwin is the excellent accompanist.

***†† *Boccaccio (Selection) (Von Suppe)*; (RCA-Victor, one 12-inch record, \$1.25). A potpourri for soloists, chorus, and orchestra, brightly conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. Lively music, well sung and sonorously recorded.

PIANO

***††† *Variations on an Original Theme* (Opus 21, No. 1), *Brahms*: (RCA-Victor, one 12-inch record, \$2). Not to be ranked with the masterly variations by Brahms on themes by Haydn, Händel, and Paganini, this is nevertheless an interesting and characteristic work. Wilhelm Bachaus is the pianist, and his performance is extremely good. Always a good recording pianist, Bachaus' tone has rarely been reproduced so well.

SPEECH

***†† *Gettysburg Address*: (Columbia, one 10-inch record, \$.75). An excellent animation of Lincoln's words as delivered by Charles Laughton in *Ruggles of Red Gap*.

DANCE

Ray Noble Medley: (RCA-Victor, 12-inch record, \$1.25). The best of the Britisher's tunes, played by himself and band. Included are *The Very Thought of You*, *Love Is the Sweetest Thing*, *Love Locked Out*, and *Goodnight Sweetheart*.

Pennies from Heaven and *Swinging at the Daisy Chain*: (Decca, 10-inch record, \$.35). Introducing the latest hot pianist, William H. "Count" Basie, and his orchestra. Basie does amazing things to the modest *Pennies*, while the reverse is a purely virtuoso concoction of his own. The first has a vocal by the admirable James Rushing.

Spic and Spanish and *Songo Songo*: (Brunswick, 10-inch record, \$.75). Latin matter by Antobal's Cubans. Fast and not-so-fast rumbas smartly played by experts in this genre. The first vocalist, labeled Chiquitto Bullo, sounds suspiciously like the Nordic, "Chick" Bullock.



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THE OPEN FORUM

(Continued from page 509)

SIR: May I congratulate you upon selecting H. L. Mencken to divine the American future? Dr. Mencken's well-known success in prognosticating the result of the recent election revealed an amazing virtuosity in handling the occult.

J. T. LYNN

Bell Buckle, Tenn.

SIR: "The Dole for Bogus Farmers" by Dr. Mencken in your December issue intrigues us. Being one, and having spent the greater part of a half-century among the yokels of which he speaks, I feel that I know this situation a little better than Brother Mencken. I respectfully call attention to the fact that the Mencken literary cult, if it can be called such, falls into the common error of passing judgment upon all who fail to measure up to passé Yankee standards.

Is it not possible that there exist literary mountebanks as well as political ones, and that many of these often mistake the foam on the beer for the beer itself? There is crying need in this nation for integrity among those who like to think themselves intellectuals — even more than among politicians. The latter can be retired, and often are, at frequent intervals. But so long as morons exist, Brother Mencken is assured of an audience.

CHARLES M. C. WOODLAND

Redfield, S. D.

SIR: Fully aware that Mr. Mencken probably requires less support or defense than any other personality in the world, I can none the less refrain from utilizing the opportunity afforded my power of expression by the complaint issued against him by H. L. Hopkins of South Dakota, which was received by you and printed in THE OPEN FORUM of the February MERCURY.

Having been a transient resident of South Dakota, I am in position to say a bit myself about the lamentable mental condition prevailing amongst many of its permanent inhabitants. Their wits are commonly as

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wind-blown and sterile as their ridiculous fields of stunted crops. Yet, while they are ever confronted, surrounded, and more or less supported by the literally naked proof of their idiocy (and finally buried in it), they and their kindred neighbors blame everyone and everything up to, and including, the sun for their eternal, infernal disasters, without ever turning their pointing fingers on themselves.

As Mencken pointed out in his "The Dole for Bogus Farmers", it would be both inhuman and idle to attempt stifling the self-centered yawns emanating from such districts—an insuperable self-interest as illustrated by Howler Hopkins, when he betrays a dissatisfied past acquaintance with Mencken's work, all of which he cleverly managed to endure until there came, from the caustic pen, something that struck immediately close to home.

There then followed the kind of mouth-foaming denunciation that only sets us a-wishing that Daddy Roosevelt could do as much for empty heads as he does for empty bellies.

FREDERIC DE LA RONDE

Chicago



RUSSIA'S PRIVATE WAR

SIR: It would give me great pleasure if you would convey to Mr. Lawrence Dennis my appreciation of his article in your February issue: "Russia's Private War in Spain". It is a calm, judicial, and logical exposition of Moscow's aims and operations in Spain and elsewhere, and I shall look forward to further articles by Mr. Dennis.

And if you do not have any more of A. J. Rongy, I will be quite satisfied. Proving an argument by quoting hard cases is sure-fire stuff for readers of "The Voice of Experience", but in THE MERCURY! Mr. Rongy belongs with the Nation. Woolly-headed reasoning is a *sine qua non* there.

GEORGE HOLLAND

Halifax, N. S.

(Continued on page xxi)



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THE OPEN FORUM

(Continued from page xxi)

THE PARACHUTE PROBLEM

SIR: I have just read the article, "How to Make Flying Safe", in the February issue of THE MERCURY. As one who has worked for twenty years on the subject of installing parachutes on airplanes, may I say that whenever it becomes practical to install parachutes on air liners, the operators of the lines will enthusiastically welcome the opportunity. This attitude is caused, not alone by a desire to save human life, but also for financial reasons. An accident, involving a fatality, is so expensive that financial reasons, if no other, would cause air lines to install parachutes.

The argument as to whether the lines should provide each passenger seat with a parachute, originates and continues probably because aeronautics, the latest of all sciences, apparently is still but little understood as a science. The federal law on the subject is set forth in the Air Commerce Act of 1926, as amended. It gives to the Secretary of Commerce regulatory powers not only over aircraft, but also over "parachutes used in connection with such aircraft". Hence, the matter has been made a subject of congressional action and of subsequent rules and regulations thereunder.

There are several factors which militate against the use of parachutes in commercial air transportation. First, the circumstances immediately preceding accidents and under which major transport accidents occur; second, the inherent defects of the parachute itself; third, the psychological reaction of the human who is unfamiliar with aeronautics and is faced with the contingency of making a parachute jump.

Taking the first group, consider the major air tragedies which have occurred in this country. Without exception, every one of them has occurred in such a manner that there is no doubt that even the pilot himself had no prescience of coming disaster. Certainly in these cases the passengers had no warning either. Air accidents happen in a split second and all is over before there is time for a warning. Under situations of this



THE OPEN FORUM

kind, the use of parachutes is impossible. Furthermore, these tragedies have taken place under such conditions of terrain and weather that evidence points conclusively to the fact that, for some appreciable period before the actual accident occurred, the plane was flying so close to the ground that the safe use of parachutes would have been impossible.

A second factor is the difficulty of egress from an airplane flying at speeds in the neighborhood of 200 miles per hour. In fact, it would be impossible for a person to escape through an opening in the fuselage at such speeds without receiving broken legs and arms, and probably a broken back. Finally, one must hit the ground. It is of great significance that a person who lands in a parachute strikes the ground with approximately the same force as if he had made a free jump from a height of about ten feet. Many skilled jumpers have received serious injuries when they failed to land correctly. Even an expert with a parachute has little or no control over the spot where he will land. The novice has absolutely none. Therefore, a person making his first jump is quite apt to land on the top of a house, or a church, a high-voltage wire, or many other obstacles promising serious injury.

In the third case, almost without exception, persons who have used parachutes in military and commercial flying have been men trained in facing death calmly. Even such men have faltered at the crucial moment when the correct use of the parachute meant life or death. The traveling public using the air lines covers the range from babes in arms to invalid old persons. It is inconceivable that an average load of air-transport passengers could respond in an emergency with the presence of mind and trained reaction essential to safe use of parachutes. Instead, there is every reason to believe that pandemonium would reign.

EDGAR S. CORRELL, *President*

Air Transport Association of America
Chicago

(Continued on page xxvii)



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THE OPEN FORUM

(Continued from page xxiii)

MRS. LAWRENCE PROTESTS

SIR: Only today I read the article in *THE MERCURY* of June, 1936, by Ford Madox Ford on my husband, D. H. Lawrence.

It was interesting to hear Mr. Ford's account of the effect Lawrence had on him. He made him class-conscious, as Lawrence often did with people.

A few of Mr. Ford's statements are wrong.

1. Lawrence never got any sum from the Croydon County Council.

2. Neither Lawrence nor I were "pro-German". But we were both too fond of our fellow men to be swept into the insane mass-hatred that was the civilian reaction in the war.

3. As for the story when Mrs. Wells and Violet Hunt and he, who was then called Mr. "Hueffer", came to see us, this is my story. Lawrence had told me that Hueffer had told him that he was descended from German barons on the Rhine. It was the beginning of the war and it had not been brought home to me yet that it was a crime to be a "Hun". When they arrived, Mrs. Wells, whom I liked very much, introduced Mr. "Hueffer" to me. He was dressed in dark civilian clothes, and only joined the army much later.

So I said in German: "We are compatriots?" Violet Hunt, whom I didn't like, replied quickly: "No, no! Russian descent."

So I had put my foot into it. Mr. Hueffer became Mr. Ford Madox Ford and preferred to be English. But that wasn't my fault.

So it isn't fair that he should accuse me of being in such bad taste as to abuse an English uniform, which he did not wear then anyhow. Lawrence was not there on that occasion; he was in Cambridge with Bertrand Russell. When he came back I asked: "Didn't you tell me that Hueffer was of German descent?"

"Yes," Lawrence said. "He has written some German verse, too."

"Well," I told him, "he is Russian now."

FRIEDA LAWRENCE

San Cristobal, N. Mex.

MR. FORD REPLIES

SIR: I am rather hazy as to what Mrs. Lawrence wants to prove. But it is comforting to think that she did not share in that civilian reaction. The opposite appeared to me at the time to be the case, but, as I have said, I absented myself from the scene at an early opportunity.

The topic of my birth which occupies most of the rest of Mrs. Lawrence's letter does not seem to me to be interesting enough to your readers for me to occupy much of your space by descanting upon it. I was early taught to avoid the example of Addison's moon. You know, perhaps, sir, that remarkable passage:

Soon as the evening shades prevail
The moon takes up her wondrous tale
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth.

I can't help it if I am descended from barons. Mrs. Lawrence, I believe, is so too. My barons were not, however, Rhinelanders but Ruthenian-Galicians — a kind of Poles. I can't believe that Miss Hunt ever said I was Russian. I have in the course of my life — and with some reason — been accused of being of French, English, German, Polish-Ruthenian, Welsh, Scotch descents . . . and American proclivities. Something similar is the case with most human beings. According to the Scientists, Mr. Hitler has nine Eurasian and twelve non-Aryan grandmothers to the *n*th degree; and every Englishman, and thus a great many inhabitants of this country, is — or perhaps "are" — descended from Henry V of Monmouth and Agincourt.

I can't help this, either. I mean that, if any one is dissatisfied, the Scientists must bear the blame. . . . But no one yet ever called me Russian and Mrs. Lawrence

(Continued on page xxviii)

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THE OPEN FORUM

(Continued from page xxvi)

rence is mistaken in thinking I "preferred" to be an Englishman. That also I could not help. I was born in England. One does not preside over the destinies of one's birth.

For the rest, I think I was in uniform; Mrs. Lawrence thinks I wasn't. I think Lawrence received some compensation from the West Kent County Council; Mrs. Lawrence thinks he received none from Croydon. I think Lawrence was present at the "scene"; Mrs. Lawrence says he was not. It is her memory against mine, and we can neither of us help our memories.

But there is one frightfulness, Mr. Editor, that I swear, by all that you or I hold divine, I never committed. I will not protest if you accuse me, or Mrs. Lawrence accuses me, of almost any imaginable or unimaginable crime. It is against my principles to protest. But this I never did, waking or sleeping, beneath suns or snows or in over-steam-heated apartments. . . . Never did I attempt to gore the gentle bosom of the German language by turning it into verse. I couldn't.

FORD MADDOX FORD

New York City

RED HERRINGS

SIR: Mr. B. W. Huebsch, who criticizes Harold Lord Varney's article on the American Civil Liberties Union, by his own admission proves Mr. Varney's contention that this organization is sold out to the Leftists. Mr. Huebsch says the ACLU is "committed to an unrelenting exposure of Fascist propaganda in America". He declares further that Mr. Roger Baldwin believes that the economics of Socialism or Communism are "vastly superior to the economics of predatory Capitalism". If these words do not imply a Leftist bias (which in the last analysis means a Marxian bias) it would be very hard to prove what they do mean. Mr. Huebsch is careful not to say that he is opposed to both Fascist and Leftist propaganda. He clamors for the rights of Com-

munist and other Radicals, but remains significantly silent as to the equal rights of Fascists and similar Right-wing groups.

The whole matter boils down to this: The Leftists have for so many years drummed into our heads that Liberal and Radical are synonymous, and that Radicalism is synonymous with embattled idealism and transcendental virtue, while on the other hand distrust of Leftism is reaction, and to be reactionary is to be intellectually insignificant, that our political values have been muddled in favor of a Leftist orthodoxy. The distinction should not be between Radical and Reactionary, but rather between common sense and malcontent fishing in troubled waters. Within such a redefinition, the ACLU might easily shed some of the beautiful glamor it has acquired as the self-appointed defender of high ideals in politics.

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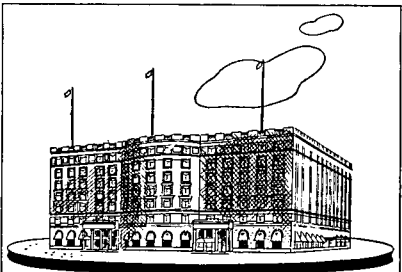
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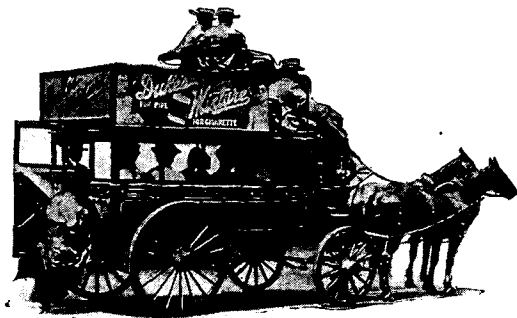
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